The African Communist

NO 82 THIRD QUARTER 1980

From RHODESIA to ZIMBABWE

INKULULEKO PUBLICATIONS

Distributors of *The African Communist*

PRICE AND SUBSCRIPTION

AFRICA

25p per copy
£1.00 per year post free
Airmail £5.00 per year
(Readers in Nigeria can subscribe
by sending 2.50 Naira to
New Horizon Publications, 14 Tamakloe Street,
Mushin, Lagos. Or to
KPS Bookshops, PMB 1023, Afikpo.)

BRITAIN

35p per copy plus postage
£2.00 per year post free

NORTH AMERICA

$1 per copy plus postage
$5 per year post free
Airmail $10.00 per year

ALL OTHER COUNTRIES

35p per copy plus postage
£2.00 per year post free
Airmail £5.00 per year

INKULULEKO PUBLICATIONS, 39 Goodge St., London W.1.

THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

Published quarterly in the interests of African solidarity, and as a forum for Marxist-Leninist thought throughout our Continent, by the South African Communist Party

No 82 Third Quarter 1980

CONTENTS

5 Editorial Notes

Our people are on the warpath; The drift towards world war must be halted; A brave freedom fighter.

T. Singh

17 From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe

Many problems confront the new state of Zimbabwe, but just as it was the support and strength of the people which enabled the Patriotic Front to conquer the forces of racism and imperialism, so the power of the people will prevail in the testing time ahead.

R. S. Nyameko

28 Trade Unions at the Crossroads

The Botha regime's plan for the recognition of African trade unions is merely a device to shackle the African workers. The author discusses the threat to the unions against the background of developments in the trade union movement since the Nationalists came to power.

A. Langa

44 Africa's links with the EEC lead to dependence

Underdeveloped countries must diversify their trade patterns and partners if they are to escape from the clutches of imperialism.

Ali Khavari

51 Why Communists Supported Khomeini: The Anti-Imperialist Tide in Iran

The Iranian revolution has been both misrepresented and misunderstood in the bourgeois press. Here a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the People's Party of Iran explains the Party's strategy and tactics. (Reprinted from *World Marxist Review.*)

Tau Ya Mogale

59 Is there a place for Black Consciousness?

Black consciousness as an aspect of progressive African nationalism has been manifested throughout the history of African resistance to white conquest and domination, and has been part of ANC policy since its inception.

Comrade Mzala

65 Armed Struggle in South Africa

An explanation of the reasons why armed struggle and military offensive operations are necessary to bring about the collapse of the racist regime.

Vukani Mawethu

74 Africa Notes and Comment

Liberia: Fruits of 'humanistic capitalism'; Chad: Militarism in N'Djamena.

A Reader

81 Role of Trade Unions in the S.A. Revolution

Can the trade union movement be the leading force in the South African revolution? A reader replies to the argument of the SACTU dissidents, showing that they ignore the lessons of South African history and in practice oppose and undermine the policies of the liberation movement.

Ruth Nhere

90 Portrait of a Bantustan

An analysis of developments in Venda — South Africa's newest 'independent' Bantustan — shows that the people are solidly opposed to the policy of the Botha regime.

97 Book Reviews

Africa Undermined, by Greg Lanning and Marti Mueller; *One Azania, One Nation: The National Question in South Africa,* by No Sizwe; *The World Market Today,* by Dmitry Kostyukhin; *Land, Labour Migration and Politics in Southern Africa: Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland,* by Donald Kalinde Kowet.

109 Letter to the Editor

From Nadine Gordimer, Johannesburg

EDITORIAL NOTES

OUR PEOPLE ARE ON THE WARPATH

The political consciousness of the oppressed peoples of South Africa is now running at an extraordinarily high level. From one end of the country to the other the people are resorting to direct action in defence of their immediate interests, in protest against the policies of apartheid, and in affirmation of the demands set out in the Freedom Charter whose 25th anniversary is being celebrated this year. The people are declaring with a united voice "that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people".

What is more significant is that the people are not simply making a declaration of their faith but are acting to make that declaration a reality. In Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg and other centres, workers are forming trade unions and going on strike in support of demands for higher wages and better conditions. Coloured, Indian and African students have boycotted their schools in protest against inferior education. The campaign for the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners has captured public imagination at home and abroad. The anniversary of the execution of freedom fighter Solomon Mahlangu has been observed in many centres, and his comrades, by their attacks on Booysens police station and other government targets have shown that they are forging ahead on the dangerous trail he blazed before them.

Most significant of all is the fact that, no matter how local the issue in which they may be involved, the activists everywhere enjoy the support of their community, and that every battle is now seen to be part of the overall war against apartheid and oppression. The Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation (PEBCO) was led by trade unionists from its inception, and played a vital role in forcing a favourable settlement in the Fords dispute. It also had links with Soweto's Committee of Ten, the executive of the Soweto Civic Association, and other militant civic organisations in various centres.

The people are no longer prepared to be ruled in the old way. When the schools boycott was at its height, with over 100,000 schoolchildren refusing to attend classes, the Transvaal Association of Teachers declared "inequality is the underlying cause of the Coloured student protest and not the activities of agitators", as alleged by Coloured Relations Minister Marais Steyn and Premier P.W. Botha.

The Transvaal Association of Teachers added: "It is our considered opinion that the name of the real agitator is written large and clear over the whole South African scene — and that agitator is *the system of massive inequality in the whole socio-economic, political and educational spectrum of South African society*". (Our emphasis.)

The evidence of the inferiority of all black education is manifest. In fact, all education is a kind of cinderella in South Africa, the state spending twice as much on defence as on the education of all races in recent years. In the year 1977-78, the last year for which detailed figures are available, out of a total state budget for education of R1,232 million, only R315 million was spent on black education, the remaining R917 million going to the whites. The per capita expenditure on school pupils in 1978-79 was as

follows:

Whites	R724
Coloureds	357
Indians	226
Africans	71

Figures produced after the strike of Coloured schoolchildren began showed that whereas the per capita expenditure on Coloured schoolchildren in 1977-78 was only 33.5% of the expenditure on white children, the ratio had dropped to 30% in the following year, while over the whole period from 1960 to 1975 the ratio had dropped from 41% to 22%. In the year 1977-78 the state spent just over R1 million on the Coloured University of the Western Cape compared with R42 million on the white universities.

Black schools are for the most part poor shacks and sheds — and sometimes the open air — compared to the solid and substantial establishments provided for the whites. There are fewer teachers for black children than for white — in 1979 the ratios were: 1 teacher for every 20 white pupils, every 26 Indian pupils, every 30 Coloured pupils and every 48 African pupils. Tens of thousands of black teachers and schoolchildren have to endure the ordeal and deprivation of the double-session system. There is a huge drop-out rate at black schools because parents cannot afford to keep their children at school; in any one year only 1% of all Coloured children at school are in standard 10, and only 0.23% of African children, compared with nearly 6% of white children. Black teachers are deprived of adequate training, only a small percentage having a university degree, and the vast majority having only a junior certificate or equivalent. Black teachers get lower pay than white teachers with the same qualifications.

Black students have other grievances. Their schools and universities are frequently invaded by security police and the campuses are constantly under the scrutiny of spies and informers. Both pupils and parents object to the compulsory uniform system, which penalises and humiliates the poorer families. Children and parents object to the abuse of the system of corporal punishment. Most schools do not have autonomous elected students' councils.

But there is more to the student protest than this. Behind the protest against segregated education which brought the Coloured children out on strike lay — just as with the Soweto children in 1976 — the years of pent-

up fury of the whole community against the inhumanity of apartheid, the viciousness of the colour bar from which the Coloured people had suffered as grievously as any other section since the Nationalists came to power in 1948. One of the main purposes of the Population Registration Act was to prevent the absorption of Coloureds in the "white" community, and Coloureds have been amongst the main victims of the Mixed Marriages and Immorality Acts outlawing sex across the colour line. In the Cape Coloureds were the special target of train and bus apartheid, while the destruction of District Six was on a par with that of Sophiatown in Johannesburg.

While millions of Africans have been driven from their homes under the government's notorious resettlement schemes, Coloureds and Indians have suffered under the Group Areas Act. Between 1950 and 1978, no fewer than 374,990 Coloureds and 172,156 Indians were forced to move, compared with only 8,299 whites, while a further 72,215 Coloureds and 59,437 Indians are marked down for future removal, compared with only 389 whites.

Above all, blacks have seen the steady erosion of their few remaining civic rights since 1948. Their parliamentary franchise (such as it was — and for most Indians it never existed) has been abolished, and the Coloureds have also lost their right to vote for and sit in local councils. This year even their right to vote for "their own" segregated Coloured Representative Council was taken away. Today Coloureds and Indians cannot vote in any election for anything, while Africans are restricted to farcical elections for Bantustan assemblies and dummy community councils in the urban areas.

In the year in which black representation in South Africa was reduced to its lowest and most meaningless level, in neighbouring Zimbabwe black majority rule was installed with Robert Mugabe as Prime Minister. The victory won by the forces of the Patriotic Front has equally been a victory for the peoples of all Southern Africa fighting against racism and imperialism, a spur to intensified struggle. The black school boycott, the "release Mandela" campaign, the country-wide strikes, the increase in guerrilla activity — all are a reflection of the swelling spirit of revolt, the new self-consciousness and self-confidence, the defiance and determination which are spreading amongst a people suppressed by force but never subdued and now more than ever convinced that armed struggle is an appropriate and effective response to a racist regime that is based on terror. Botha demands that the opponents of apartheid should work only

by constitutional means, but for the blacks there are no constitutional means available and they refuse to respect or abide by a constitution which they have had no hand in drawing up and which specifically excludes them from effective participation in the affairs of state.

The victory of the Patriotic Front forces in Zimbabwe has not only struck a blow against the racists of all Southern Africa, but also served warning on the buffer "moderates" and "middle class" elements whom the Botha regime and its imperialist allies have been promoting and encouraging as a counter to the liberation front headed by the African National Congress. Just as the Rhodesian "moderates" like Muzorewa were discredited and swept aside by the harsh logic of battle, so have the South African "moderates" and "constitutionalists", the men who play the Bantustan or Chamber of Commerce game, the black carpet-baggers so acceptable at the White House and in Whitehall, been cut down to size by the freedom fighters who have brought independence to the neighbouring states of Angola, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

In an effort to contain the spreading forces of revolution in South Africa, the Botha regime has come forward with its so-called "reforms" which turn out on examination to be frauds and confidence tricks. The recommendations contained in the interim report of the Schlebusch commission tabled in Parliament last May are a case in point. Far from receiving any share in real power, voteless Coloureds, Indians and Chinese are being asked to take part in the farce of a nominated State President's Council where, together with some whites, they will be asked to draw up advisory reports on matters of common interest for presentation to the all-white Parliament. For their part the Africans are offered even less — membership of a nominated Council which will act in an advisory capacity to the State President's Council. There is no way in which this pathetic travesty can be made acceptable to any section of black opinion. Its sole purpose is to deceive critics of apartheid that the government is treading the path of "consultation" rather than "confrontation". The net effect of this "reform" is to preserve and consolidate white domination — now euphemistically called "white self-determination" by the racist semanticists.

This is what Botha advances as an alternative to the national convention representative of all sections of the South African population, the demand for which has swept through South Africa like a veld fire in the wake of the Patriotic Front victory in Zimbabwe. And linked with this is the unequivocal demand for the release of Nelson Mandela and other political

prisoners and the return of political exiles, for no convention without them could in any way be considered representative. Not all the protagonists of a national convention share a common outlook on the future of South Africa, but all believe that it is the only alternative to intensifying conflict in South Africa with all the death and devastation it will bring in its wake. It is worth recalling that it was Nelson Mandela who was the key speaker at the Maritzburg conference of 1960 at which the demand for this type of national convention was first put forward.

The Botha regime's response has been a flat refusal either to consider power-sharing of any kind or to release Mandela or any other political prisoners. The recent statements of Botha and other Cabinet ministers, as well as the report of the Schlebusch commission, make it clear that no form of convention, consultation, constellation or any other form of association with black South Africa convened under the aegis of the Botha regime will ever be held on the basis of equality or even election. The history of this century is littered with advisory bodies, elected and non-elected, set up by white regimes to speak for blacks — for example the location advisory boards established under the 1923 Urban Areas Act, the Native Representative Council set up by the 1936 Representation of Natives Act, and the appointed Coloured Council provided for in this year's legislation. All have proved a failure because, elected or non-elected, the government has listened to none of them — indeed has disbanded them the moment they began to voice the real demands of the people. Botha is prepared to "consult" rather than "confront" provided the people he consults are willing to say "Ja Baas" and not argue.

The leader of the New Republic Party, Vause Raw, put the racist view succinctly when he said in Parliament last April:

"We cannot come to terms with revolutionaries. We cannot take people like Mandela from jail and sue for peace with them now. We have not reached that stage".

The white racists still feel strong. None of those in Parliament supports majority rule based on one man one vote. The regime still puts its faith in the army, on which it is spending over R2,000 million a year. Above all, the racists still rely on their ability to divide and rule, to play off one black community against another.

The liberation movement is engaged in the struggle to defeat their stratagems, to consolidate black unity and win over an increasing section of white opinion to their side. Just as the power of the hard line white Rhodesian Front was broken by the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe, so white

power will be broken in South Africa. But it will not be broken by appeasement, compromise or conciliation, as the black "moderates" who follow Botha's line make out. Only hard, unremitting and intensified struggle on the lines set out in the ANC's strategy and tactics and the statements of the SA Communist Party will bring the white racists to their knees and open the way to real freedom.

The recent upsurge of people's struggle in South Africa, the demonstrations of African-Coloured-Indian unity, the increasing challenges to the regime posed by progressive whites more and more of whom, including war resisters, are identifying with the people's cause, the successes of Umkhonto we Sizwe — all these are signs that the time is not too far distant when it is the people's leaders who will be dictating terms to the racists and opening the prison doors. We beg no favours from the likes of Botha and Raw but will see to it by our own efforts that Mandela and his comrades regain their liberty and South Africa is firmly set on the path to true independence and democracy — the path chalked out in the Freedom Charter.

THE DRIFT TOWARDS WORLD WAR MUST BE HALTED

The danger of war flowing from the anti-Soviet stance adopted by the United States and its western satellites in the recent period should not be underestimated. President Carter's military invasion of Iran, ostensibly aimed at securing the release of the hostages held at the US embassy in Teheran, could easily have been the trigger of an all-out conflict leading to the involvement of further numbers of US troops. Already it seems clear that the real purpose of the abortive mission was not merely to free the hostages but in the process to link up with a fifth column in Iran, overthrow the Khomeini regime and instal a bourgeois government capable of protecting US oil and strategic interests in the area. With events of this magnitude occurring on her southern border and threatening the stability of the Middle East, could the Soviet Union have remained aloof? Was not the foreknowledge of this kind of scenario one of the factors which led the Soviet government to respond to the repeated requests of the Afghan government for assistance in overcoming the forces of counter-

revolution inspired, aided and abetted by the imperialist powers and China?

The fiasco of the Carter adventure should not be interpreted as the end of the threat of US military intervention in the region. The fact is that the whole Middle East is a tinder-box of repression in which a concatenation of circumstances can lead to a revolution at any time. The popular upsurge which led to the overthrow of the Shah could swell up again in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states — in fact anywhere in the region where reactionary feudal regimes are maintained in power by the imperialists who value their countries (a) as a major source of their oil requirements and (b) as a buffer against alleged "Soviet expansionism", and who care nothing for the millions of Middle Eastern peoples who suffer poverty, humiliation and deprivation of human rights as a result of their policies.

It is because the United States and its western allies regard any form of social change or revolution in the underdeveloped world as a threat to the survival of capitalism that they scream so stridently about the "Soviet menace". Let the Iranian people overthrow the Shah — placed in power by the CIA and propped up by American bayonets — and the US blames Moscow. Let the people of Nicaragua overthrow the bestial Somoza regime, and the US blames Cuba, which in their eyes is the same thing as Moscow. But the oppressed peoples are resorting to revolutionary action everywhere in the world — and everywhere the US pretends to see the hand of Moscow. True, the Soviet Union is the friend of all genuine liberation movements, as we know well in Africa. But nowhere has the Soviet Union instigated or ordered revolution — it is contrary to the principles of Marxism-Leninism which makes it abundantly clear that revolution is not for export but must arise from the objective conditions prevailing in any particular country. In fact it is the imperialists and in particular the United States imperialists who are fomenting international conflicts and attempting to export counter-revolution.

The post-Shah relationship between the United States and Iran makes plain that the threat of aggression and war arises not from some imagined "Soviet expansionism" but from the inherent contradiction between imperialism and the popular forces striving for social change in the imperialist dominated countries. No one in his right mind can accuse Ayatollah Khomeini of being a stooge of Moscow. It is the experience of his country and his people which has convinced him and the mass of the Iranian people that the chief enemy of their revolution is, not the Soviet Union, but imperialism headed by the United States, and as a result the

whole direction of the Iranian revolution has been anti-imperialist, anti-US. Counter-revolutionary forces are still active in Iran, however, and the United States, whether it is Carter, Reagan, Kennedy, Bush or anybody else who is in office, will continute to support the forces of counter-revolution and attempt to reverse the course of history, to restore Iran to the capitalist orbit, and to contain the forces of revolution in other Middle East countries.

This explains why, to the dismay of some of its Western partners, the United States seems to be concentrating all its attention on Iran instead of Afghanistan. To all but the benighted ideologists and nostalgic jingos of Whitehall, it is plain that, thanks to the fraternal assistance provided by the Soviet Union, the ability of the imperialists to turn the clock back in Afghanistan has been removed once and for all. But the fate of Iran is still in the melting pot, and the US is determined to do everything in its power to destabilise the Khomeini regime, to defeat the popular forces and to strengthen the forces of reaction, to roll back the revolutionary tide and instal on the Peacock Throne if not the diseased body of the Shah, that of a relative or some other pliable incumbent.

The US problem is that every step it takes serves only to reinforce the conviction of the Iranian people that the main danger to their revolution comes from the US. The Khomeini regime was asking very little for the release of the US hostages — merely an apology from Carter for past mistakes and for US complicity in the unspeakable crimes of the Shah's regime. This Carter was not prepared to do, because the US action flowed inevitably from the US social system, from US imperialism, and he was not prepared to apologise for that. The US was determined to continue on the same old path of imperialist aggression, to attempt to force the peoples of the underdeveloped world into continued dependency.

The US is thus set inevitably on a collision course, not only with the revolutionary forces in Iran, but with the forces working for independence, national liberation and social justice everywhere in the world. And as the boundaries of imperialism contract under the inexorable pressures of history and popular struggle, the US imperialist beast becomes more and more desperate, less balanced in its judgments, less confident of the future, more impetuous and unstable, more ready to resort to force in a bid to restore its flagging fortunes. Inevitably the Carter fiasco last April calls to mind the madness which overtook Anthony Eden at the time of the Suez invasion of 1956, bringing the world to the brink of war because Eden couldn't tell the difference between 1956 and 1936 and foolishly equated

Nasser with Hitler because Nasser had dared to nationalise the Suez Canal. Now history has moved on again, but in the White House sit men obsessed with a succession of defeats for imperialism since the end of the second world war, and defeats especially for the US, which is more and more tempted to resort to nuclear warfare in the hope of redressing the international class balance and restoring the image of the US as the world's "top nation" (Carter's boast in his state of the nation address last January).

It is easy enough to ridicule the United States and its counter-revolutionary and anti-human policies, but the end-result of these policies can be a nuclear conflagration in which all humanity will be the losers and civilisation as we know it will perish. A wounded imperialism is no paper tiger. The danger of war on a world scale is now very real, and the progressive forces of the world must unite and intensify their efforts to prevent it. The fight for peace must be raised to a new level. The cold-war anti-Soviet hysterics of Carter, Brzezinski and Thatcher must be combated. The deployment of new weapons of nuclear destruction directed against the Soviet Union must be resisted. The forging of an anti-Soviet axis between imperialism and the Chinese must be frustrated. The spirit of detente must be revived and strengthened. SALT 2 must be ratified and concrete steps taken towards universal disarmament.

The liberation movement cannot stand aside from the fight for peace, because all its hopes will be destroyed if the flames of war are allowed to spread. The fight against war, the fight against nuclear weapons, is a fight for the creation of the conditions in which the struggle against imperialism and for national liberation can be brought to a speedy and successful conclusion. Let the fight for peace be raised to the top of our agenda because peace and freedom are indivisible.

A BRAVE FREEDOM FIGHTER

Lilian Ngoyi, one of the great spirits of the South African resistance movement, died at her home in Soweto on March 12, 1980, at the age of 68. She is mourned and deeply missed by all her comrades.

Lilian Ngoyi was born in Pretoria in 1911, the daughter of a mineworker and a washerwoman. After her schooling at Kilnerton she began to train as a nurse, but was forced by poverty to give up her studies and started to earn her living as a garment worker in 1945. She was active in the Garment Workers' Union and became a member of its executive.

She entered the political arena and joined the African National Congress during the great Defiance Campaign of 1952, when nearly 10,000 South Africans of all races went to jail in protest against the unjust apartheid laws. She herself was jailed for using post office facilities reserved for whites.

Her dynamic personality and brilliance as a public speaker quickly pushed her into the leadership. In 1955 she became a member of the Transvaal ANC executive and in December 1956 the first woman ever to be elected to the ANC national executive committee. In 1954 she was elected one of the vice-presidents of the newly-formed Federation of South African Women and in 1956 became its president.

In December 1955, after she had been elected President of the ANC Women's League at its annual congress in December, she appealed to women to discard all fear in the struggle against injustices.

"If the government deports women in the impending struggle against passes", she said, "they will bring new hope to those in whose midst they are thrown in their deportation; if they are sent to jail they will convert the jails into institutions for universal education".

Lilian displayed this spirit of determination and defiance throughout her career, and as a result was marked down by the security police for special attention, especially after her trip overseas in 1955 to attend the World Congress of Mothers held in Lausanne, Switzerland, by the Women's International Democratic Federation. Afterwards she toured the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, her impressions of which aroused intense interest at the many meetings she addressed on her return home.

Lilian threw herself into the campaign against passes for women. In March 1956 she led a march of 500 women to the Native Commissioner in Germiston, and on August 9 of the same year headed with Helen Joseph

and two others the giant demonstration of 20,000 women to present the anti-pass petition signed by hundreds of thousands of women to Prime Minister Strijdom at his office in Pretoria.

In December 1956 she was one of the 156 men and women arrested for treason because of her work for the Congress of the People which adopted the Freedom Charter, and was one of the main group of accused who had to endure the strain of the trial during all its stages until it ended in acquittal in 1961. In the post-Sharpeville state of emergency she was jailed without trial for five months, 71 days of which were spent in solitary confinement.

Her first banning order was served on her in 1962, and from then until her death, with the exception of a short period between orders, she was confined to Orlando, forbidden all normal contact with her fellow human beings, unable to attend meetings, unable to take a job. There can be no doubt that the persecution to which she was subjected by the regime led to the premature development of the heart condition which caused her death.

Lilian Ngoyi was a brave woman, a fighter who placed the interests of her people and their struggle for liberation before her own welfare, who never failed to respond to the call of service and sacrifice. The flag she bore aloft so proudly throughout her lifetime is now in the hands of thousands of her compatriots who have come forward in answer to her call.

§§§

FROM RHODESIA TO ZIMBABWE

by T. Singh

The overwhelming victory of the Patriotic Front forces, led by ZANU and ZAPU, in the recently-held pre-independence elections in Zimbabwe, marks yet another decisive defeat for white supremacy rule, colonialism and imperialism in southern Africa. Born of decades of struggle and sacrifice, it represents yet another great stride forward in the southern African revolutionary process. It is a victory for Africa and for the world-wide democratic, progressive and anti-imperialist forces. It crowns a decade of crushing defeats suffered by imperialism on a world-wide scale. The fighting people of Zimbabwe can be justifiably proud of their achievement in joining hands with the peoples of Vietnam, Kampuchea, Laos, Iran, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique in breaking the chains of oppression imposed by racism, feudalism, colonialism and imperialism.

On April 18, 1980, the new state of Zimbabwe was formally proclaimed and took her rightful place in the Organisation of African Unity and in the world community of sovereign and independent nations. The sun finally set on the British Empire in Africa.

On that momentous day, Robert Mugabe, leader of ZANU (Patriotic Front) formally assumed the powers and responsibility of Prime Minister — the first in the history of the country to assume office by the express will of the majority of the people. In the 100-member Parliament ZANU with 57 seats and ZAPU with 20 seats command an absolute majority.

It was abundantly clear, both during the Lancaster House conference and the run-up to the elections, that British imperialism, in open collusion with the South African racists, planned to retain the Smith-Muzorewa "internal settlement" regime in power despite the participation of the PF forces.

The Lancaster House conference was the first phase of this strategy. It will be recalled that the present Conservative government, far from condemning the "internal settlement", welcomed it as a step in the right direction towards majority rule and claimed that it represented "a new reality". In this they had the support of the United States, and both countries worked towards gaining some international recognition for the regime.

Matters came to a head at the Commonwealth Conference held in Lusaka when African heads of state, fearful that the Thatcher government would go ahead with the unilateral lifting of sanctions as a step toward the recognition of the Muzorewa-Smith clique, forced the British Prime Minister to declare her government's acceptance of the principle of *genuine* majority rule. But the single factor which was of crucial importance in compelling Britain to convene the Lancaster House conference was the rising tide of armed struggle in Zimbabwe which was daily increasing in intensity and threatening to sweep away the Salisbury regime of terror.

Throughout the talks at Lancaster House it became apparent that Britain was in effect negotiating on behalf of the Smith-Muzorewa regime, which it regarded as the best instrument for the maintenance of neo-colonial dominance. On three crucial issues — the future constitution, the cease-fire arrangements, and the timing and conduct of the elections — the PF was forced to make important concessions which it recognised would seriously disadvantage it and present grave dangers to the organisations, cadres and leaders.

In the event, the PF saw the conference through to the end and emerged from it as the most credible popular force in Zimbabwe. But the British government felt confident enough that the concessions, especially the guarantee of 20 reserved seats for the white minority, would be strong

factors in preventing an outright PF victory in the elections and securing the installation of a shaky coalition government.

The stage was now set for stage two of the neo-colonial strategy. Its objective: to stop at all costs a clear-cut victory for either one of the PF forces, or a combination of the two — in other words, to ensure that if Muzorewa's UANC could not itself win a majority of the 80 contested seats, it would at least win a sufficient number which, taking the 20 white seats into account, would result in a stalemate. In these circumstances, Lord Soames, installed as governor, would then form a government for Zimbabwe under the powers conferred on him by the Lancaster House agreement. Such a government would have been presented to the world as "a government of national unity," but would have been one in which the very forces who had fought hardest for the freedom of Zimbabwe — the PF and the mass of the people — would have been left without a decisive voice in the affairs of Zimbabwe.

The entire conduct of Soames, the South African racists, the reactionaries within Zimbabwe and the multinational corporations was designed to produce exactly this result, leading to the installation of a neo-colonial regime in power. However, despite all the difficulties and obstacles, the PF forces nevertheless emerged victorious, proving once more that the people will neither be cowed into submission nor acquiesce in any neo-colonial schemes. They proved once again that the people are with the guerilla forces and a part of them when their own aspirations and interests are expressed and fought for by the freedom organisations.

Armed Struggle — the road to victory

The road to political power by the patriotic forces was never an easy one. The victory they scored at the polls was the direct outcome of the success scored on the battlefields of Zimbabwe. By the time the Lancaster House conference was convened almost 90% of the country was under martial law — a fact testifying to the extent of influence of the guerilla forces and the degree of support given to them by the local population. The armed struggle succeeded in breaking the backbone of the UDI regime of Ian Smith. It rendered the internal settlement of Smith-Muzorewa-Chirau-Sithole hopeless, and in the end, when the crumbling political and military authority of the regime was being threatened with complete collapse, it forced the convening of the Lancaster House conference.

As with most genuine revolutionary movements which have as their objective not merely the seizure of political power but the exercise of that

power in the interests of the broad masses of the people, the decision by the patriotic forces of Zimbabwe to embark on armed struggle was not made out of free choice from a number of options, but one forced on them by the arrogance and intransigence of white supremacy rule.

Sporadic acts of violence had already surfaced during the anti-Federation campaigns launched by the African National Congress of Rhodesia under the leadership of Joshua Nkomo.

Following the banning of the ANC in 1959 the National Democratic Party (NDP) was formed, again led by Joshua Nkomo. The real political issues facing the African people became much more clearly perceived, as were the goals of the struggle and the strategy to achieve these. The objective of the political struggle was defined to be majority rule on the basis of one man one vote. Whereas the methods of struggle had up to then relied solely on mass campaigns involving non-collaboration with the civil administration, boycotts and strikes, and anti-cattle dipping campaigns in the countryside, now, in addition, planned acts of sabotage began to be undertaken on a modest scale. All of this was designed to force Great Britain, the colonial authority, to bring about constitutional changes in line with the demand for majority rule.

In the end the NDP was banned and the 1962 constitution, although making provision for the introduction of Africans into parliament, left the structures of colonial rule and white domination intact. Only 15 of the 65 seats in parliament were allocated to Africans. This glaring act of race-rule in itself became a rallying point for the further organisation of the African people towards the goal of majority rule, and the organisation that was created in 1962 was the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), led by Joshua Nkomo.

It was at this point that the issue of the maximum strategy for majority rule became the focal point. All the contradictions latent within a national liberation movement which unites in its ranks widely disparate political and ideological trends and tendencies surfaced around this issue. The result was the formation of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) under the leadership of the reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, in August, 1963.

In November, 1965, the Rhodesian racists within the Rhodesian Front Party under the leadership of Ian Smith declared UDI (unilateral declaration of independence) in an attempt to forestall any move by Britain to grant independence to Rhodesia which would have involved some form of power-sharing with the African majority. Both ZAPU and ZANU had already been banned and this act limited the option of means

to (a) submission to racism, pure and simple, or (b) resort to armed struggle.

Even so, the coup by the white racist minority brought with it a lingering hope that Britain would act to right the situation, if not crush the rebellion, as imperial Britain had done against other rebellions in her colonies. As international pressures mounted, however, Harold Wilson, then Prime Minister, assured the world that the rebellion would not last a week with the application of mandatory sanctions by the UN Security Council. By 1966 most illusions of a peaceful settlement of the Zimbabwe issue by either the force of sanctions or British intervention had evaporated, and with them any political obstacles to the armed struggle as the means to bring liberation to the African majority.

In 1967 the first full-scale armed clashes commenced between the Rhodesian forces and those of ZAPU and the ANC of South African in the Wankie area. The ANC freedom fighters engaged in joint operations with ZAPU forces whilst en route to operational centres in South Africa.

The Battle for Zimbabwe had begun in earnest and the years since then were to witness the growing strength, stature and successes of the guerilla forces of ZANU and ZAPU which opened the way for the election successes.

The Pretoria-Salisbury Axis

For long periods of the armed struggle the guerilla forces faced formidable difficulties. There were no secure home bases initially, which meant that almost everything to do with the prosecution of the struggle had to be conducted from outside — rear bases in the front line states, primarily Zambia and Mozambique. Apart from questions such as recruiting, training, arming, adequate logistics, infiltrating armed cadres back into the country and establishing proper lines of communications, political differences and dissensions surfaced within both movements threatening to paralyse the struggle.

The turning point in the fortunes of the guerilla movements came undoubtedly with the liberation of Angola and Mozambique and the consequent change in the balance of forces in the whole of southern Africa in favour of the forces of national liberation. But as with all struggles that centre around the issues of life and liberty, it is to the people of Zimbabwe, the millions of toilers, that the main credit must go for the triumph over race rule and colonialism. An estimated 20,000, mostly unarmed men, women and children lost their lives in the course of the almost fifteen years

of armed struggle. Thousands have been maimed and suffered injuries. More than a quarter million had to flee from home and country to seek refuge in neighbouring states there to be pursued by devastating bombing raids from the Rhodesian and South African air forces. They were the victims of "free fire zones" and "protected villages"; of martial law, arrests, torture, detention, murder; of systematic starvation through the confiscation of land, produce and livestock.

The Rhodesian racists on the other hand suffered none of these debilities, not even sanctions. They were in control of an army equipped with modern weapons, which were not in short supply at any time; an air force which could be, and was, deployed for internal repression and external aggression against the guerilla rear bases; a para-military police force, and above all, a well developed economy, fueled by constant injections of fresh funds.

None of this would have been possible without racist South Africa. Men, money and machines poured into Rhodesia to stem the revolutionary struggle and decimate the ranks of the freedom fighters. Without this massive aid the Rhodesian racists and their African puppets would have collapsed long before Lancaster House.

Trade between the two racist regimes expanded enormously and South Africa became the import-export lifeline of Rhodesia in flagrant violation of the UN Security Council's mandatory sanctions order. South African capital penetrated every pore of the Rhodesian economy and became the bedrock of the regime's attempts to nullify the effects of sanctions.

Right from the outbreak of armed confrontation South African para-military and regular forces fought with the Rhodesian forces. Towards the end of the conflict regular units of the South African army and air force had become fully integrated into the racist war machine and have been estimated to number well over 6,000 men. Apart from men, war materials and spare parts of every conceivable type were sent into the country.

In many ways Rhodesia came to be regarded as South Africa's sixth province, and with some justification on the side of the Pretoria racists. As it became more apparent that the racist puppet politicians had lost control to the Rhodesian army bosses for the conduct of the anti popular war, so it became more obvious that it was the South African army bosses who actually were in control of and taking the decisions of the war effort.

Nor was South Africa the only ally that the Rhodesian racists had. The continued supply of oil by British Petroleum, a multinational in which the British government has a substantial shareholding, throughout the office

of both Labour and Conservative governments, is an indication of the forces allied to the continuation of race rule in Zimbabwe. Nor should we forget that the United States government specifically broke the sanctions order by the import of chrome from Rhodesia.

Direct material support apart, imperialism, in particular British and American, launched one diplomatic scheme after another to save the Rhodesian racists and so safeguard a future Zimbabwe as an enclave of imperialist domination and exploitation. Victoria Falls, Geneva, Anglo-American Proposals versions I and II, Lancaster House were all designed to arrive at a neo-colonial solution. On the side of the PF forces were the people, the front line states, the OAU, the socialist countries, and the democratic and progressive anti-imperialist forces throughout the world. The victory of the PF forces would have been impossible without them, and is equally a victory for them.

The new Zimbabwe

It is clear that the new state of Zimbabwe faces considerable problems in the post-colonial period, involving both a process of reconstruction and the eradication of the heritage of race and colonial rule in the advance to people's power.

South African racist-fascist rule and intentions in this region continue to pose a threat to the drive for political and economic independence of Zimbabwe as well as the independent African states in the entire southern African sub-continent. And the apartheid regime has indicated in no uncertain terms that its armed forces will intervene directly if its "borders and security" are "undermined". Since the South African racists have on previous occasions arrogated to themselves "borders" well beyond the geo-political limits constituting South Africa; and since what would be considered "undermining" its "security" has been left deliberately undefined, we can expect the arrogance of race-power to assert itself under any circumstances determined by Pretoria.

At the same time the regime is peddling the "constellation of southern African states" concept more vigorously than ever "as a means for economic cooperation" and "peace" in the region. In effect the new arrangement would mean nothing less than the establishment of a Pax South Africana! It represents a clearly-defined strategy of maintaining the rule of the South African and international imperialists with the white supremacist state as the guarantor of the domination and exploitation this involves.

Internally, the drive for the creation of a non-racial democracy, as the state form in which people's power will advance — a goal proclaimed by both components of the Patriotic Front — faces the new government and patriotic organisations with a number of crucial tasks.

The land question has been a burning issue. Some 80% of the population are to be found in the rural areas, the majority of them either small farmers or rural workers. The 1930 Land Apportionment Act allocated nearly half the country; consisting of the most fertile regions, for white farming and occupation.

In the course of the armed struggle hundreds of thousands became displaced or had to flee. The resettlement and allocation of land to these people is an urgent task facing the new government.

The PF govenment faces the task of completely dismantling the racial structures in every sphere of life so that non-racialism is not only established in law, but becomes the essence of practice.

It faces the enormous task of eradicating illiteracy, the desegregation of schools and other institutions of learning, as well as correcting the inequality of provisions and opportunities for education inherent in the previous racist-colonial system.

The vast wage and pay differentials between black and white workers, another heritage of the past, will certainly occupy the attention of the government. As will the drive for an end to the super-exploitation of black workers, improvement in their labour conditions and the granting of rights to workers to form independent trade unions to safeguard the workers' interests.

Most important, Zimbabwe's economy is dominated by the giant monopolies and transnational corporations from South Africa, Great Britain, the United States and other capitalist countries. No one, least of all the Patriotic Front forces, needs to be reminded of the disastrous effects the transnationals have had on the all-round development of the economies in which they operate. Where direct political control has proved impossible, imperialism's main weapon has always rested on economic domination through the monopolies.

Foreign investment in Zimbabwe grew by about 300 per cent during the 15 years of UDI and is now estimated at between R2 billion and R3 billion. British capital stock in Zimbabwe last year was valued at R1,291 million (compared with R360 million in 1965), South African capital stock at more than R810 million (compared with R180 million in 1965). Foreign capital headed by South Africa's Anglo-American Corporation, Britain's

Lonrho and Rio Tinto, America's Falcon Mines and Union Carbide controls more than 90 per cent of mining production, and five of Zimbabwe's ten top industrial companies are either controlled by or associated with South African companies. Of the 150 British companies operating in Zimbabwe, no fewer than 119 also have South African subsidiaries, so that the South African connection is even stronger than the figures suggest. To have the major share of mining, manufacturing, banking, agriculture and ranching dominated by foreign capital is liability enough; to have South Africa as potentially the biggest investor is far worse.

These are indeed serious tasks facing the new Zimbabwe. And their solution will not be made easier with the presence within the heart of the body politic, the economy and the state apparatus of the former servants of local, South African and international finance-capital. This is the direct legacy of the Lancaster House agreement forced on the Patriotic Front by British imperialism.

In this situation however the PF forces in government can count on one asset which remains the most powerful for change — the people. Their strength and vitality, their capacity to stand firm, their unwavering loyalty to the forces of radical change have carried the strugle thus far. They will remain undaunted by the immensity of the tasks facing Zimbabwe as long as their considerable talents and strength are harnessed in the struggles ahead.

Southern Africa after Zimbabwe

There can be no doubt that the victory of the PF forces in Zimbabwe has immeasurably heightened the crisis for the apartheid regime, whilst at the same time enhancing the prospects for the revolutionary struggles waged by the African National Congress in South Africa and SWAPO in Namibia. The once granite-like Lisbon-Pretoria-Salisbury alliance has crumbled before the determined armed onslaught of the oppressed peoples and their revolutionary organisations.

In South Africa and Namibia the oppressed people have greeted the PF victory with unbounded joy. The myth of the invincibility of white supremacy rule has once more bitten the dust. Armed struggle as a liberating instrument in the strategy of liberation has been vindicated in the eyes of the people, leaving those who pronounce against it in utter bewilderment.

White South Africa itself has been stunned by the immensity of the

defeat suffered by its former ally. "What next?" is the question uppermost in everyone's mind.

In Namibia fourteen years of combatting the armed cadres of SWAPO have failed to defeat the movement or the people's support for it. In fact, the opposite is true: SWAPO has become the decisive factor in the elaboration of the Namibian solution. At the moment more than 50,000 racist South African troops, together with the bandits of Jonas Savimbi's UNITA, are tied down inside Namibia to deal with SWAPO. Mass arrests, torture and murder of the people and SWAPO members plus the imposition of an "internal settlement" regime headed by the Turnhalle Alliance have been unable to alter the situation against SWAPO and the people.

South Africa has continuously reneged on the UN settlement proposals in an attempt to improve its own solution in Namibia. In this, the racists have been greatly aided by the western "Contact Group" who have been supposedly involved in persuading the regime to negotiate a settlement. The group itself has now lost much of its credibility and pressures for a solution of the Namibian question on the basis of the UN proposals have once more been mounting.

The Namibian issue is under continuous discussion in the UN Security Council. If the racist regime refuses to negotiate, the international community has made it clear that mandatory economic sanctions will be applied to force the hand of the racists. Even spokesmen from the "Contact Group" have warned South Africa that this is a strong probability. Since their own role has come under criticism, it is not likely that the allies of the regime will risk international opprobrium by openly opposing the UN call. The options open to the apartheid regime have now been narrowed down considerably: either defy the UN and face the prospect of mandatory economic sanctions, or agree to UN supervised elections and face the real prospect of a SWAPO victory.

Within South Africa itself the Botha-Malan clique are witnessing a growing upsurge of mass struggles. The oppressed people are more and more defiant of the regime and its apparatus of terror. Armed actions by the guerilla forces of the ANC, in the very heart of the cities, are becoming a growing feature of the South African situation. The attack and destruction of a large part of the Booysens police station, in the centre of a white suburb, coming as it did shortly after the events in Zimbabwe, sent shock waves through the white community. Black scholars and students are in revolt.

The Botha-Treurnicht clash is a reflection of the crisis eating into the very heart of the body politic of white supremacy rule. The essential question now facing the apartheid rulers is what kind of concessions to introduce and the pace at which these should be offered to win sections of the black people over and placate international pressures. In a major policy speech recently, Botha, whilst severely rebuking the verkramptes for their reluctance to agree to changes in the field of "petty" apartheid, posed the question facing white South Africa: confrontation or conciliation? Changes in the Immorality and Mixed Marriages Acts, he declared, were not essential to the survival of South Africa. Black, white and brown, he continued had to unite in combatting the menace of communism now threatening the country. Pointing to a monument in Pretoria, he urged South Africans to think about the 6,000 young men who had already died defending their country.

He then proceeded to elaborate on how black, brown and white were to save the country in unity: he will soon convene a states conference where the leaders of the people, all of them, will meet to discuss the future of the country and to create the necessary structures for consultation and co-operation. Which "leaders" and what kind of future he did not specify. However, he made clear his proposals do not mean one man one vote. That was, according to Botha, decidedly not in the interests of the black people, or for that matter, the white people either.

The racist white minority leaders have already seen the storm clouds gathering. The racists will resist with all the means at their disposal. But Zimbabwe has proved once more that no power can withstand the hammer blows of a revolution which has the support of the mass of the people, led by a revolutionary organisation, with a leadership which has been tried and tested in the fire of decades of struggle. Such are the formidable forces which the South African racists and their international allies are now facing.

Yesterday, Anglo and Mozambique. Today, Zimbabwe. Tomorrow, Namibia and South Africa.

The southern African revolution is on the march.

25th Anniversary of SACTU

TRADE UNION MOVEMENT AT THE CROSSROADS

by R. S. Nyameko

1980 marks the 25th anniversary of the South African Congress of Trade Unions and has been declared as the year of mobilisation of the workers. SACTU's main task is the organization of workers irrespective of race, colour, or creed into genuine and independent trade unions. From its very inception SACTU declared that the struggle for higher wages, better working and living conditions, the right to have African trade unions, the right to collective bargaining, strike, assembly and association must be combined with the struggle for political, social and economic liberation.

Just as the trade union movement in other capitalist countries could never have achieved its present position if previous generations of workers had not struggled for the right to vote, to strike and for free unfettered trade unions so will we have to struggle for our inalienable rights. History has shown that the struggle for economic rights is inseparable from political demands.

SACTU declares total support for the National Liberation Movement. Its declaration of principles states that:

"The future of the people of South Africa is in the hands of the workers. Only the working class, in alliance with other progressive minded sections of the community, can build a happy life for all South Africans, a life free from unemployment, free from racial hatred and oppression, a life of vast opportunities for all people.

"But the working class can only succeed in this great and noble endeavour if it itself is united and strong, if it is conscious of its inspiring responsibility. The workers of South Africa need a united trade union movement in which all sections of the working class can play their part unhindered by prejudice or racial discrimination. Only such a truly united movement can serve effectively the interests of the workers, both the immediate interests of higher wages and better conditions of life and work as well as the ultimate objective of complete emancipation for which our forefathers have fought."

The South African trade union movement is fragmented. This is not the only country where this kind of division exists, but it has certain unique features arising from the cleavages between ethnic (racial), national and economic categories. For instance, South Africans are usually classified into distinct categories, firstly into black and white and secondly into sub-divisions of each major category. On the white front we have English, Afrikaners and Jews — and now also Portuguese. On the black front we have Africans, Coloureds and Indians.

This classification is a mixture of racial and national indices. In addition, however, there is a distinction between the supervisors, operatives and labourers — commonly referred to as unskilled and semi-skilled.(1)

I am not presenting this list of categories as a crude sociological analysis. The distinctions are useful only in explaining the various trade union centres that have emerged and which may yet come to the surface as a result of changes in the labour laws associated with the Wiehahn Commission report. The fragmentation is obviously the result of the socio-economic cleavages in the working class, and must be taken into account in any attempt to bring about unity such as SACTU aims at.

We regard as workers all propertyless persons who are employed to produce surplus value in return for a wage which is the cost of their subsistence. A white worker who identifies with the ruling white race is still a worker because of his position in relation to production, just as a worker who votes conservative or joins a fascist party is still objectively a worker. Not all workers are working class conscious at all times, but all workers are class conscious in some situations. For example, when white workers demand higher wages they come into conflict with the employing class and to that extent are class conscious. Many anomalies can arise. For instance

the bulk of the white Mine Workers' Union members went on strike in March last year in protest against the transfer of three coloured skilled workers from the Rietberg mine situated at Concordia, Namaqualand, in a Coloured settlement area to the Nababeep mine O'Kiep in Namaqualand. (Is Rietberg a 'Colouredstan' whereas O'Kiep is an 'Afrikanerstan'?) The white Mine Workers' Union action was a negation of class consciousness — it was just pure racialism in defence of the colour bar.

These racial, national and socio-economic cleavages are reflected in the trade union centres enumerated below. In alphabetic order:

TABLE I

TRADE UNION CENTRES

Name	no. of unions	membership			total
		African	Col/ Indian	White	
Black Consultative Committee (Jhb.)	9	33,000			33,000
Co-ordinating Council of T.U.[a]	12			28,000	28,000
Fosatu	13	48,000	12,000		60,000
SA Confederation of Labour[b]	22			179,700	179,700
Trade Union Council of SA[c]	59	21,122	171,747	59,865	252,734
SACTU[d]					
	115	102,122	183,747	267,565	553,434

(a) Ten of these unions representing 22,500 members are also affiliated to the SA Confederation of Labour. Most of the members are employed by provincial and municipal councils (not in salaried categories).

(b) 176,728 of their membership are state employees i.e. SAR&H, Iscor, Sasol, etc.

(c) 7 of the 59 are African unions, 19 are Coloured and Asian only, 23 are mixed i.e. white, Coloured and Asian members, and 10 have white members only.

(d) SACTU's affiliates are omitted. SACTU's influence can be measured by those trade unions which follow and respond to SACTU's policy. For reasons of security these unions are not stated.

81 registered unions are not affiliated to any centre and their total membership is made up as follows:

TABLE II

African	Coloured/Indian	White	Total
	57,000	184,500	241,500

White members of these unions are employed in building societies, at ESCOM, municipalities, underground (mines), banks and others. The Coloured and Indian members are from SAR&H, municipal, industrial and service unions. The latter are keeping up a tradition of non-affiliation. They resent TUCSA's white-dominated leadership and are not yet prepared to join a trade union centre with a predominantly African leadership.

Background History

The following is a brief history of these trade union centres.

The old SA Trades and Labour Council split precisely on the issue of race.[2] Even before the Nationalists came into power,[3] some of the more extreme white racist unions and particularly those associated with the Nationalist Party, like miners, the iron and steel workers, and some building workers, adopted an apartheid policy. These unions rejected any association with Africans, Coloured and Indian unions and formed the Co-ordinating Council of Trade Unions (Koordineerende Raad Van Vakunies).

What is the big divide in the trade union movement? It is between those unions who fully accept the principle of class solidarity as against those who accept apartheid and segregation. It is between those unions that follow the apartheid line and those who reject it either wholly or in part. Amongst the former are the unions of the SA Co-ordinating Council and the SA Confederation of Labour.

The Co-ordinating Council of Trade Unions was formed in 1948 (June) and the SA Confederation of Labour later, the one consisting of Afrikaners and the other of Afrikaner and English-speaking workers. They are the most vicious exponents of apartheid as shown in their objections to the Wiehahn recommendations.

The Nationalist Party immediately after the assumption of power in 1948 appointed a commission to investigate the then existing industrial laws. The commission submitted its Report in 1951.[4] The regime then introduced the Native Labour Settlement of Disputes Act in 1953, which denied official recognition to African trade unions, declared all strikes of

African workers to be illegal and introduced Labour Committees. The government also set out by banishment, banning, arrests and dismissals of leaders of African trade unions to try and make African unions 'die a natural death.'[5]

In 1953 the British TUC paid its first visit to SA, met the SATLC, the Council of NE Trade Unions (CNETU) and the government. The Industrial Conciliation Bill (which became the Act of 1956), providing for apartheid in trade unions and job reservation, was being circulated by the regime 'confidentially' to 'reliable' trade union leaders and the British trade union delegation (TUC). The British TUC recommended to the SATLC 'that in the greater interest and urgent necessity of unity' they should apply apartheid.

Most of the affiliates of the SA Trades and Labour Council (SATLC), imbued with the virus of racialism, decided in October 1954 to disband the SATLC, and SATUC (SA Trade Union Council which later changed its name to TUCSA to avoid being confused with SACTU) was formed with a constitution which specified that only unions registered under the IC Act could affiliate – thus excluding African unions. Thereupon unions with African, Coloured and Indian members refused to affiliate to TUCSA.

SACTU was established on the 5th March 1955 as the only genuine non-racial trade union centre. Emphasising the interaction between political and economic issues, SACTU launched campaigns to organise the unorganised African workers for £1-a-day, and joined in mass demonstrations with the ANC against pass laws, Suppression of Communism Act, the Native Labour Settlement of Disputes Act and other oppressive legislation. Though SACTU was never banned, the regime persecuted its officials and activists with harsh severity. Many have been banned, restricted, exiled to Bantustams or abroad, tortured and killed in detention.[6] Nevertheless SACTU has consistently maintained its aim to build a non-racial militant trade union movement which participates wholeheartedly in the national liberation struggle.

On the other side of the spectrum are several organisations representing wholly or for the most part Africans. The most important of these is FOSATU – Federation of SA Trade Unions. Another is the Black Consultative Committee of Trade Unions in Johannesburg.

In 1958 the ICFTU visited South Africa. They advised SACTU not to cooperate with the ANC, not to participate in political action, to break any ties it had with the WFTU. When SACTU refused to accept their advice the ICFTU refused to lend any support in SACTU's campaign, and

instead switched its support to SACTU's dissident few unions who in 1959 established the Federation of Free African Trade Unions – FOFATUSA. FOFATUSA was affiliated to the ICFTU and received large sums of money from them.

Change of Course

In 1962, TUCSA's annual conference, noting the international trade union opposition to apartheid, amended its constitution to admit Africans. i.e. all 'bona fide' unions may apply for affiliation. This was done to get TUCSA accepted to international trade union conferences and the ILO. TUCSA established an African Affairs Dept. like the government's Bantu Affairs Dept. This Dept. was established to deal with research, public relations and mainly to organise African trade unions in opposition to SACTU unions. For example, it set up the Engineering and Allied Workers' Union in opposition to SACTU's Iron and Steel Workers' Union. TUCSA received support for this work from the D.G.B. (Deutsche Gewerkschaft Bund), FRG National Trade Union Centre. The African trade unions did not trust TUCSA because of TUCSA's policy of treating African trade unions as a football. The British TUC in their 1973 report evaluated that TUCSA 'spent R45 for every African trade union member that it had recruited'.

Only a few African unions affiliated to TUCSA. Some African unions like the National Union of Clothing Workers were affiliated to both TUCSA and FOFATUSA.

In January 1966 FOFATUSA announced its dissolution. Lucy Mvubelo appealed to African trade unions which belonged to FOFATUSA to join TUCSA.

The regime threatened TUCSA. White reactionary trade unions demonstrated their dislike for its policy by resigning from TUCSA. TUCSA thereupon held an emergency meeting early in 1968 to discuss its serious situation with affiliates. Lucy Mvubelo, to appease white reactionary influences in TUCSA, appealed to African union delegates 'not to embarrass TUCSA and to disaffiliate from TUCSA'. Other African trade union leaders objected to her slave policy and said 'No, we will not leave on our own'.

TUCSA's 1968 annual conference, to appease the regime and white racist reactionaries, once again amended its constitution to exclude African trade unions. It put forward a policy that African workers be

allowed to form their own employee organisations, or alternatively, that they be admitted to the registered bodies 'under white control and guidance if necessary, on a limited rights basis'[7], ie as half or ¼ member! The following year, they stated: 'It is proposed that additional power possibly be given to Black Labour officers'.[8] TUCSA was trying their best to help the regime to make the Native Labour Settlement of Disputes Act of 1953 work. African workers rejected TUCSA's policy as they rejected the Works Committees in terms of the Act.

TUCSA's African Affairs Department (AAD) collapsed in 1969. The Urban Training Project was established in 1971 by Eric Tyacke and Loet Dekker, both of whom worked for TUCSA's AAD, to take over the work and to sanction the Workers' Committees in terms of the Native Labour Settlement of Disputes Act of 1953. The UTP was heavily financed by the FRG government, through the German Catholic Development Fund, and other church organisations.

The cost of living was rising but wages were at a standstill. African workers were on the move. In 1969 the African dockers in Durban came out on strike, PUTCO drivers went on strike in June 1972 and other African workers in various parts of the country were confronting employers and the regime in their demand for higher wages. The Urban Training Project under pressure from African workers modified its position on Works Committees, regarding them as complementary to, rather than substitutes for trade unions. It took up a 'non-political stance', strongly opposed all forms of international boycott of South African goods and formed some trade unions.

Whites Lose Ground

TUCSA was conscious of the significant changes in the work force: that the white trade unions affiliated to them represented a small and diminishing proportion of the work force. As the white workers moved up the industrial ladder into supervisory and managerial positions, the African, Coloured and Indian workers' proportion in industry was increasing. Last but not least, TUCSA was meeting with greater hostility from the International Labour Movement because of its compromise with apartheid.

As a result of SACTU's work, the first International Trade Union Conference against apartheid was held in Geneva in June 1973. Neither TUCSA's officials nor its stooge Lucy Mvubelo were allowed to address this conference.

Later in 1973, TUCSA's annual conference held in Durban once again amended the constitution so that 'bona fide' unions could affiliate to TUCSA, and told a TUC delegation that 'there had never been any objection to the growth of responsible trade unions.'

Special attention has to be given to TUCSA because of its size and historical associations. Some people at home and abroad think that it holds an intermediate position between the extreme racists on the one hand and those who absolutely reject apartheid on the other.

Through its affiliated membership TUCSA is more than ¾ Coloured and Indian, but has a white-dominated leadership. Above all there is a form of collaboration between the leadership of TUCSA, the regime and employers.

TUCSA did not raise its voice to protest against the murder of children in the 1976-1977 uprisings or against the murder of freedom fighters amongst whom were leading trade unionists like Elijah Loza, Lawrence Ndzanga and Luke Mazwembe, who were tortured to death while in detention.

Grobbelaar, TUCSA's general secretary, defended the mass banning of trade unionists and their supporters in November 1976. A number of those banned took him to court and he had to pay R1,000 damages to each.

At the annual conference in 1976 TUCSA adopted a resolution against job reservation along the lines adopted by the SA Chamber of Industries and Chamber of Commerce and following the speech made by the regime's Minister of Labour. TUCSA emphasised that Africans can come into white jobs, but only on the principle of equal pay for equal work and did not launch a campaign for training African workers for skilled jobs.

The 1977 annual conference resolved: 'The council reiterates TUCSA's irrevocable opposition to boycotts and sanctions . . . . conference also deplores efforts to isolate South Africa in the labour, economic, cultural, scientific, sporting and diplomatic and political fields . . . .' Grobbelaar and Lucy Mvubelo have been to business conventions in USA on behalf of the SA Foundation to urge bankers and industrialists to invest in and trade with South Africa.

At TUCSA's 1978 conference a resolution was moved to protest against the mass removals of Africans in Unibell, Modderdam weg and Crossroads, but the TUCSA leadership opposed it and the majority of the conference delegates supported them.

State President B J Vorster was invited to open the 1979 annual conference when TUCSA was to celebrate its 25th anniversary, and

cabinet ministers Piet Koornhof, Chris Heunis and Connie Mulder were also invited to attend.[9] Owing to the Muldergate scandal John Vorster did not open the conference. However Fanie Botha, the regime's Labour Minister, complimented TUCSA on its 'exemplary' record and its valuable contacts abroad[10].

Fanie Botha is fully aware of TUCSA's policy of supporting the state against freedom fighters. In the preamble to its Constitution TUCSA declares its dedication 'to oppose communism in all its forms, to resist actively all attempts by any political party to exploit the TU movement for political ends' and to promote actively the free trade union movement . . . . 'to the general benefit of the SA economy.'[11]

This is the voice of the regime. At its last conference when veteran trade unionists like Morris Kagan and Dulcie Hartwell of the National Union of Distributive Workers appealed for full moral and financial support for the strikers of Fattis and Monis, Bellville and Eveready in P.E., invoking the long established TU principle that 'when workers are on strike then everybody must come to their assistance', conference turned down the call by one vote. The reason given for not supporting the Fattis and Monis strike was because the Food and Canning Workers' Union 'had political inclinations'.[12]

TUCSA aims at building and absorbing parallel unions for African workers. A 'blueprint' for this contains proposals for the establishment of an organising committee to assist TUCSA affiliates in their organising efforts '. . . . to recommend organising projects and consider applications from TUCSA and non-TUCSA unions for financial assistance for organising work'. These 'organising projects' are designed to undermine existing African trade unions and to prevent the growth of an independent African trade union movement. The organisation of parallel unions is in line with the regime's labour policy. As the Wiehahn Commission reported: Africans 'are no longer, from the point of view of unionisation "mainly unskilled"; the possession of skills apart, they have achieved a far greater degree of employment stability and industrialisation'[13].

Therefore, maintaining the 'rate for the job' as Africans penetrate skilled and semi-skilled positions requires for TUCSA the organisation of African workers into parallel unions that will subscribe to the principle of 'rate for the job' – thus protecting the white workers' position. That also explains why the TUCSA leadership rejected a resolution attacking the Mine Workers' Union for its March 1979 strike over the employment of 3 Coloured miners.

Dangerous Game

Some trade union leaders of African unions are conscious of TUCSA's dangerous game. The Western Province General Workers' Union (unregistered) had first hand experience. It organised the Cape stevedoring workers, submitted demands to the management for higher wages and the right of the elected workers' committee to represent the stevedores. The stevedoring employers said they 'would only negotiate with registered unions, but would talk and listen to unregistered unions'. TUCSA moved in to organise a dockworkers' union in opposition to the W.P General Workers' Union. When the W.P. General Workers' Union called a meeting of stevedores for Saturday 15th December, TUCSA called a meeting for the same day and time (their leaflet was distributed by the companies) and even provided transport. The W.P. General Workers' Union had an attendance of 350 whilst TUCSA's meeting had only one worker.

FOSATU accuses the organisers of the new parallel unions of trying to undermine the 'independent' unions. They also claim that recruiting for these unions is done by the companies themselves and that companies also provide facilities that are denied to the 'independent' unions.[14] Employers in the engineering industry confirm FOSATU's accusations. A Non-ferrous Metals spokesman 'concedes that management has granted the parallel National Engineering Industrial and Allied Union facilities'[15] and 'GEC confirms that it is co-operating with the parallel Electrical and Allied Workers Union.'[16]

TUCSA's leadership, unashamed of their treacherous policy, carry on in collaboration with the employers and the regime to break the unity of the African workers. Here is more proof:

Andre Malherbe, TUCSA's president said: 'Employers tend to prefer parallel unions because these have good records of co-operation. Many of these so-called independent unions have been involved in confrontations.'[17]

Arthur Grobbelaar elaborated this when he said: 'I don't know if our unions have formed an alliance with management — but if they have, good luck to them. Co-operation with management is the crux of industrial relations. I hope TUCSA unions are co-operating with management. This falls within the ambit of partnership in industry.'[18] TUCSA is planning to revive its education and training department with the assistance of UNISA's Institute of Labour Relations.

The regime has acknowledged TUCSA's assistance — Arthur

Grobbelaar, Ronnie Webb and Lucy Mvubelo have been appointed by Fanie Botha to the National Manpower Commission.[19]

If TUCSA is playing the government's game in opposing the development of a free democratic trade union movement, no African or progressive trade union leader ever had any illusions about the Co-ordinating Council and the Confederation of Labour — they set out clearly their position of defending only the interests of the white workers and the regime.

A united, politically conscious, virile, effective and efficient opposition trade union leadership is necessary to prevent TUCSA and the regime from succeeding in their plan. Have we such a body that is capable of mobilizing the African, Coloured, Indian and progressive white trade unions?

During and after the 1973 strikes there was a marked increase in the work of organising African workers and the need for a unified African trade union centre became urgent. TUCSA was bankrupt in policy and not trusted by the African trade unions. Various groups, from the Wages Commission to Aid Societies, mushroomed in the country — The Black Consultative Committee of T.U. (an offspring of and nurtured by the UTP); Trade Union Advisory and Co-ordinating Council (TUACC, formed in October 1973 with 5 African trade unions in Natal); Council of Industrial Workers of the Witwatersrand (CIWW); Western Province Advice Bureau formed in 1972; Drake Koka's BAWU. Only tenuous links existed between them.

Revolutionary Upsurge

The revolutionary upsurge that began in 1976 exposed the weakness in the African trade union movement, which failed to provide adequate leadership to the workers as well as to scholars and students — sons and daughters of the African working class. Workers provided at the most supportive action and the absence of a determined working class component revealed the weakness of our labour organisations.

Early in 1977 a fresh start was made to establish a federation of like-minded representatives from unregistered and registered trade unions. A meeting took place on the 23rd March in Johannesburg with representatives from all groupings and sponsors. A measure of agreement was reached with the sole exception of Lucy Mvubelo's National Union of Clothing Workers and Evelyn Seloro's Textile Workers' Union who declared that TUCSA already served the role of a federation. The meeting decided that a federation of unregistered and registered trade unions

acceptable to the membership concerned be established. A feasibility Committee was elected to put this into practice by establishing lines of communication in various regions.

There followed a number of Feasibility and Regional Committee meetings, and some progress was made. But the Consultative Committee obstructed any movement by insisting that only union secretaries and not executives be present at the meeting, which TUAAC would not accept.

Despite numerous meetings no progress was made until October 1st, 1978, when 5 Unions from the Transvaal meeting at Sharpeville pledged their support for the Federation and the way was cleared for a National Federation.

A seminar was held in Durban on October 21-22, 1978, where the basic policies of the Federation were provisionally thrashed out. This seminar was sabotaged by the African American Labour Centre (AALC) which convened a conference in the Holiday Inn Hotel, Gaborone, for October 20-21-22, 1978, as well. In Gaborone the US Ambasador to Pretoria said:

> "The Conference was called to share experiences among the 10 South African trade unionists with the rest of the African trade unionists for the purpose of improving their trade union work and secondly for the AALC to be able to determine the requirements of the South African Trade Unions."[20]

He attacked SACTU and said:

> "SACTU is not at home. It is an external body and in any case more of a political group than a trade union."

It is obvious with what motive in mind this attack was launched.

He thereafter appealed to unions to support foreign investments in South Africa. Amongst the African trade unionists present were Sara Chitya, of the National Union of Clothing Workers; Evelyn Selora, of the Textile Workers' Union; 6 from the UTP-Consultative Committee of Black Trade Unions, a delegate from WASA, the Black Journalists Union, and Mary Ranta. Also present was Drake Koka who lived in Gaborone and helped the AALC to set up this conference. There was not a single trade unionist from Natal or the Cape Province.

In addition to AALC personnel there were African trade unionists from Liberia, Togo, Kenya, Lesotho, Botswana, Zambia and Zaire. All these trade unionists attended the Conference in defiance of a decision by the OATUU Secretariat that its affiliates should not attend. Delegates were given an 'allowance' of R50 a day to attend a conference whose aim was to disrupt the free development of African unions.

The feeling expressed by a few South African delegates was "that the

Americans should not try to divide them from SACTU. Any trade unionist worth his weight has been trained by SACTU. It is wrong to claim that SACTU has no presence at home, because they work amongst the workers. If they should surface they will be arrested. In pressing for fundamental political change, SACTU is expressing our aspirations. Workers cannot say aloud that they welcome SACTU's stand for fear of being detained."[20]

In spite of the sabotage tried by the AALC, the seminar in Durban set the date for convening a conference for April 14 and 15, 1979, and there established FOSATU, the Federation of South African Trade Unions founded by 12 unions.

FOSATU's aims and objectives as set out in its constitution include:

i) to secure social justice for all workers;
ii) to strive to build a united labour movement independent of race, colour, creed or sex;
iii) to bring together all splinter groups, craft unions, and small unions into broadly based industrial unions;
iv) to secure decent standards of living, social security and fair conditions of work for all members of affiliated unions and the working clas as a whole;
v) to comment on, advance or oppose any policy of any authority or institution affecting the interests generally and the interests of the labour movement in particular".[21]

The 12 unions which founded FOSATU are:

i) four unions affiliated to the Durban-based TUACC, including a national Metalworkers' union;
ii) three unions which broke away from the Johannesburg-based Consultative Committee of Black Trade Unions;
iii) two national unions for Coloured and African motor workers;
iv) two Eastern Cape unions for Coloured chemical and food workers;
v) a Western Cape union for Coloured motor assembly workers.

FOSATU's general secretary, Alec Erwin, in his inaugural address followed the trails of TUACC, Black Consultative Committee to abstain from politics and criticised SACTU. He said of SACTU that "rather than advancing the workers' interests they subordinated themselves to their ANC masters, who did not only have workers' interests at heart, and diverted their energies from factory organisation to political campaigns."[22]

By these remarks FOSATU is also guided along the false trail to abstain from politics. Nowhere does Mr. Erwin outline FOSATU's position on such vital matters as pass laws, citizenship laws, the colour bar and the disabilities and discrimination that affect the African as a worker. It is

historically and factually incorrect to say that SACTU has not advanced the workers' interests. SACTU carried out an organising campaign amongst the most oppressed and exploited workers, farmworkers, mine workers, exposed the farm labour scandals, campaigned for £1-a-day, against unemployment, for insurance and workmen's compensation.

There is no clear demarcation between politics and economics. The two types of activity or struggle are inextricably interwoven because the black workers are denied political rights. In the case of African workers every wage demand brings them into conflict with the regime. Trade union representatives are constantly liable to penalties and repressive action by the regime. Dismissal from jobs and endorsement out of towns are hazards faced by every African trade union official who adequately represents his people. In these circumstances a trade union official is compelled to take a political stand against state policies that deny workers elementary rights, against the enormous violations of human rights that impose a constant burden on African workers in their daily lives, the restriction of free movement, residence and occupation, the imposition of foreign citizenship on millions of Africans classified as subjects of one or other Bantustan which denies them the right to work freely in their own country. They are subjected to the harsh rigours of a bureaucracy over which they have no control and which has no parallel in any part of the world.

A trade union has an obligation to protect its members against such intolerable restrictions of freedom and liberty.

FOSATU convened a summit meeting on November 3-4, 1979, in Johannesburg where the unions agreed on a joint statement that their struggle was not for registration but the maintenance of certain basic principles. These internationally accepted principles were the right of all workers to unrestricted control of their unions and to join unions of their choice[23]. This was a good manifestation of unity, but there have since been some changes in FOSATU's approach. Now much more is necessary to secure the existence and continuation of free unfettered African trade unions.

Aims And Demands

An emergency meeting should be convened with delegates of registered and unregistered unions. No petty squabbles or excuses for not joining this campaign should be tolerated — either they are on the side of TUCSA or on the side of free African trade unions under the leadership of honest dedicated workers. There must be in a campaign to:

(a) Expose TUCSA to all workers at home. Leaflets in all languages should explain the treacherous role of TUCSA.
(b) A special appeal should be made to TUCSA affiliates and a particular appeal to Coloured and Indian trade union centres to disaffiliate from TUCSA and refrain from assisting TUCSA in its treachery. The 'organising' projects of TUCSA must be shunned.
(c) This emergency meeting should address letters exposing TUCSA's treacherous policy to the International Labour Organisations – ICFTU, WFTU, WCL, OATUU and all other international trade union sections. Union leadership and affiliates which do not dissociate from TUCSA and do not actively and effectively stop this treacherous work must be isolated from the International Labour movement. A special appeal must be made to the Metal International Federation, a body to which engineering unions actively participating in TUCSA's treachery and organising parallel unions belong. We must declare our opposition to this.
(b) A Central Organising Committee must be set up to undertake the work of organising workers in one union for one industry. The African miners, railway and harbour workers must be organised and the existing African unions strengthened. Dedicated working men and women in the existing unions, who have learnt how to organise and know the benefits of united organisations for their fellow workers, must be recruited for this task.

Forward in the struggle to prevent TUCSA and the regime from weakening and destroying the African Trade Unions.

Refuse to subject your trade union to the control of the Boer-regime's National Manpower Commission.

The control of your unions must be in your own hands.

Down with 'parallel unions'.

Build unions of your own choice under your own leadership.

Demand equal rights for all in citizenship, education, training, jobs, wages and in every sphere of life.

Notes:

1. "Blacks predominate in most sectors that employ manual labour" says Aart Rouken de Lange in his study of employment trends over the past 30 years to 1976 (F.M. 14/9/79)
2. The TLC was non-racial, it had African, White, Coloured and Indian unions.
3. In fact they helped the N.P. to attain power.
4. Report of Industrial Legislation Commission, U.G. 62-51
5. Assembly Debates, Aug. 4th, 1953, c.872.

6. Comrades Lawrence Ndzanga, Luke Mazwembe and Elijah Loza were all tortured to death in detention.
7. A. Grobbelaar in *TUCSA Newsletter* No 62 July 1968.
8. A Policy Committee recommendation adopted June 1969.
9. *Financial Mail* 13/4/79.
10. *Cape Argus* 18/9/79.
11. iii), iv) & xi) of the preamble to the Constitution.
12. *Cape Times* 13/9/79.
13. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Labour Legislation, 1979 Part 1 paragraph 3:32.
14. RDM 19/12/79.
15. Star 19/11/69.
16. FM 16/11/79.
17. Star 19/11/79.
18. FM 16/11/79.
19. Garment Worker 9/11/79.
20. From an interview on 10/12/78.
21. *Journal of Labour Relations,* Vol. 3 no. 2, June 1979.
22. Erwin's speech at the Inaugural Congress of FOSATU Page 4.
23. *RDM* 5/11/79.

§§§

AFRICA'S LINKS WITH EEC LEAD TO DEPENDENCE

by A. Langa

For all underdeveloped countries, their relations with the world economic system loom constantly as a large, often overwhelming, policy problem. The imperial past ensures that almost every economic issue — domestic production, trade, foreign exchange, investment in new enterprises — is intimately affected by the world economy's structure and fortunes. Increasingly, of course, this is true for all countries, rich and poor, capitalist and socialist: the effects of inflation, of oil prices or of monetary crises are registered in every part of the globe.

But there are crucial differences. For the socialist countries, central planning, public ownership and closely co-ordinated mutual economic relations provide substantial protection for national economies, and for the living standards of the mass of the people. Thus for example the CMEA ("Comecon") member countries are able to adjust much more easily to rising world prices for oil because their major supplier, the Soviet Union, adjusts prices by a five-year "rolling average" method, rather than in sharp and unpredictable jumps. If foreign debt is incurred, it is a consequence of planning decisions about priorities for the whole of the

society, rather than a crippling of the entire national economy for the benefit of a small number of domestic and foreign exploiters. (This is not to forget, of course, that the accumulation of convertible-currency debt can assume alarming proportions in a socialist economy undergoing rapid modernization, as has been the case in Poland in recent years).

For the advanced capitalist countries (and especially the major imperialist powers), there are other options. Ultimately their crisis is deeper than that of the developing countries since it springs from deep structural contradictions in the heart of capitalism itself, and is manifested in chronic inflation, currency instability, slowing growth and massive and growing unemployment. But the policies available for the time being to cope with crisis are quite numerous — attacking their own workers to drive down the cost of labour (e.g. by deliberately increasing unemployment), and increasing the degree of inter-imperialist co-ordination of financial, trading and other policies — especially towards the developing countries — through international institutions such as the IMF, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the European Economic Community. There are of course limits to this process, set by inter-capitalist competition — as has been clear from the disunity among the Western powers over financial and other sanctions against Iran. But the point is that the vast power and diversification of the advanced capitalist economies confers strategic advantages on them over the rest of the world — and especially over the imperialist-dominated nations — which enables them to pass on a good deal of the cost of capitalist crisis.

Limited Options

For most underdeveloped countries, and especially for the ex-colonial ones, the options are correspondingly limited by the operation of a world economy dominated by the advanced capitalist countries and by the giant transnational conglomerate monopolies. The share of the socialist countries in world trade, although rising quite fast, is still small in aggregate terms. Moreover, the bulk of this trade is still between socialist countries and the industrialised capitalist world, although the socialist bloc has been taking energetic measures to increase the proportion of foreign trade with developing countries.

Most developing countries, therefore, find themselves forced to conduct the bulk of their trade with the imperialist nations. And they do so from a position of grotesque disadvantage — with domestic economies geared to the production of one or two crops or minerals for export, and with import

requirements, even for bare essentials, which make the earning of foreign currency a desperate necessity. When these factors are added to backward and distorted forces of production, and huge and growing hard-currency debts to international finance capital (both of these are prominent features of most African economies), the vice of under-development squeezes very tightly indeed. Newly liberated countries, such as Zimbabwe, face urgent needs for economic transformation, but also strong pressures from established interests to "play the game".

Given these facts of life, it is obvious that one part of the struggle against underdevelopment and the unequal relations imposed by imperialism must be an attempt to alter the balance between the advanced capitalist countries and the underdeveloped countries in favour of the latter. The attempt of the so-called Group of 77 developing countries (in fact numbering about 130) and of the Non-Aligned Movement to enforce a New International Economic Order is one important movement in this direction. More concretely, however, there have been attempts to negotiate trading and other agreements with the major industrial nations which would improve the relative position of developing countries.

One of the most important outcomes, certainly as far as Africa is concerned, has been the Lome Convention, signed between 58 African, Caribbean and Pacific territories (most of them independent countries) and the European Economic Community. It is this so-called ACP-EEC pact which Zimbabwe has declared it wishes to join, and of which most sub-Saharan African countries are already members.

What It Means

What are the economic and political realities behind this Convention, named after the capital of Togo, where it was signed?

The first five-year pact ran 1975-79; the second, re-negotiated over the last few years, took effect for a further five years from the beginning of 1980. Aside from the recitation of legal provisions, therefore, we have only the experience of Lome I to go on, though some of the differences which Lome II is likely to make can be estimated.

The main components of the Lome Convention are:

— *trade*. Most ACP exports to the EEC were to be free of duty, without the EEC demanding reciprocal rights for its goods. In fact, this provision has not led to a great expansion of ACP exports to the EEC — by 1978, the balance of trade had turned from an overall surplus in the ACP countries' favour of $2.4 billion into a $1.1 billion deficit. It was EEC

exports, rather than ACP exports, which benefitted from the pact. Although higher world commodity prices improved the position last year, the fact remains that the Convention has conferred substantial advantages on the EEC.

The overall trade advantages for the ACP countries are more doubtful — especially when ACP countries have tried to compete with specially protected EEC products, like textiles or foods covered by the Common Market's Common Agricultural Policy. In those cases, a system of discriminatory levies against developing countries' products come into force to ensure that they stick to their proper place in the trade pecking order, and do not interfere with the profits of ludicrously subsidized European capitalist and small-farmer producers.

Finally, the benefits of trade are very unequally distributed: six ACP countries (Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Zambia, Zaire, Cameroun and Gabon) account for about two-thirds of total EEC imports from the ACP countries: the pact has had negligible effects on the growth of exports by the others.

— *"aid"*. Lome I provided about $4.5 billion in various kinds of financing, about 60% in the form of grants. Lome II is worth about $7 billion, around 50% more in money terms but about the same when inflation has been discounted. But the finance in Lome II is harder — proportionately more in loans, and less in grants. The grant element still remains over 50% of the total, but falls far short of what the developing countries were demanding as a serious contribution to economic re-structuring from the richest bloc of nations in the world.

— *industrialization*. The major portion of Lome financing has been intended for industrial promotion and economic diversification. In fact, very, very little has been achieved. By the end of 1979, less than a quarter of the total aid under Lome I had actually been paid out — partly because of obstruction and delay by the EEC, partly because of the long time it takes to get industrial projects off the ground, and most importantly because any industrialization in the ACP countries which threatens European industries doesn't get funded.

— *stabilization*. The Stabex system has been of considerable use to a number of African countries. It is intended to stabilize, to some extent, the export receipts of ACP countries faced with widely fluctuating world commodity prices. When their receipts for certain major crops go down below a certain threshold, the Stabex fund provides compensatory financing up to an agreed level. Some ACP countries are expected to

repay this money if their export prices then rise again, but the repayments provision is not applied against 35 of the poorest ACP countries.

Stabex has undoubtedly been useful for a number of countries. Countries and commodities which have benefitted particularly included Senegal (groundnuts), Mauretania (iron ore), Tanzania (sisal), Niger (groundnuts), and Benin (cotton). The major criticisms of the developing countries have been, firstly, that the money behind the scheme is not enough ($530m. in Lome I, $770m. in Lome II), and that the commodities covered and rules of operation are too stringent and are discriminatory against developing countries. Iron was the only mineral in Lome I: all minerals are excluded from Stabex in Lome II, and the liberalizations of other rules are marginal. The mineral exclusion will be highly relevant to Zimbabwe, of course, and so will the exclusion of tobacco — although the latter seems open to negotiation.

— *mineral exploitation*. The EEC governments excluded minerals from Lome I because they wanted to take advantage of the buyer's market in mineral commodities in the 1970s — and which produced, for example, the disastrous prices for copper which have almost wrecked the Zambian economy. Now, however, there is a growing strategic interest in the West in securing mineral supplies — especially oil, of course, but other minerals produced by the ACP countries as well. About $400m. has thus been set aside under Lome II for a scheme called Minex.

The operation of the scheme is not yet clear. What appears to be the aim, however, is to provide mineral producing countries with low-interest loans to restore production to previous levels if it should drop *for any reason* — because of low prices, or perhaps strikes, or technical difficulties. The purpose of the scheme, obviously, is to ensure for Europe supplies of vital raw materials — and to provide strong financial incentives to ACP countries to remain committed to primary commodity production: an incentive, in fact, against diversification.

These, then, are some of the economic realities against which African and other developing countries must judge their policy alternatives and their interests. It is clear that new signatories and existing members of the Lome convention cannot make simple, principled or political judgements about the scheme. The power of the EEC is immense in the world economy — it is the biggest trading entity in the world — and the policy response must therefore be on several levels.

Firstly and most importantly, there is the level of political strategy and

overall path of development. It is perfectly obvious that the political objective of Lome, from the point of view of the EEC powers, is to bind the developing member countries with economic and political ties which assure EEC trading, investment, and strategic interests. It is equally obvious that the only independent response to that attempt at neo-colonial intensification is one of rejection. This requires, primarily, the ideological, social and political base *in each developing country* which enables political resistance to be mounted, a principled position to be maintained, and alternatives actively explored and implemented. For new states like Zimbabwe or Mozambique this is of course especially difficult in the early stages — although the degree of political organization and ideological clarity can be a major compensatory factor.

Socialist Countries

Secondly, this entails translation of general political strategy into concrete internal alliances, negotiations and tactics. Here, the central feature must clearly be relations with the socialist countries — not because they can completely supplant the EEC as a market and supplier (this is not possible, for the most part), but because they provide the essential political and material counterweight to the power of world capitalism. Zimbabwe and many other countries would still be struggling desperately for independence but for the concrete help and international power of the socialist camp: in the new phase of economic construction, that power will likewise prove indispensable.

The most important aspect of this assistance, aside from specific trade agreements and so forth, is likely to be in the help which the revolutionary countries can provide in supporting collective action by the exploited countries — for example, putting economic flesh on the political bones of the non-aligned movement, or stepping up the economic capacity of the OAU. The EEC and the rest of the capitalist world will certainly want to shoot down such efforts — precisely because economic co-operation among developing countries, and between them and the socialist economies, are a direct threat to the world power of capital. It is interesting, in this connection, that the ACP countries have begun urgent negotiation to get intra-ACP trade on to a better footing — and that a high ACP official remarked recently, apropos of European attitudes to Lome, "ideological questions are mainly used to try and confuse us so as to limit our economic relationships to only one group of countries, without necessarily ensuring that we select the most advantageous economic relationships, or those that

our people desire."

Lome cannot increase the dependence of African and other countries, nor can it worsen their overall economic position, if these domestic and political bases of resistance are securely established. For many countries, this is unfortunately not the case: where it is, however, Lome may offer some small concrete advantages, and a collective foothold from which to bargain with the imperialists for more. The struggle continues on many fronts, and all of them have pitfalls for the unwary.

WHY COMMUNISTS SUPPORTED KHOMEINI

THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST TIDE IN IRAN

by Ali Khavari

The anti-imperialist struggle in Iran is gathering momentum as a logical result of the February 1979 revolution, which overthrew the shah's despotic regime and has since carried out many democratic and anti-imperialist measures. These developments are evidence that a people determined to have freedom and independence can break the most brutal resistance of dictators and their imperialist masters and achieve its goals. The Iranian revolution is pursuing two fundamental aims: the first is the anti-imperialist aim to make the country independent of imperialism politically, economically, militarily, and culturally; the second is the democratic aim to effect far-reaching social changes in favour of the working people, in other words, to bring democratic rights and freedoms primarily to all wage and salary earners.

The fall of the shah's hated regime was brought about by the armed people and a section of the army at the height of the revolutionary movement in February 1979. This historic event marked the end of the first stage of the revolution, which began with isolated protest actions and massive demonstrations that were put down with brute force. The

movement of the working and oppressed masses went from strength to strength. A milestone was the big strikes called in the closing months of 1978, which paralysed the regime and greatly hastened its inevitable downfall.[1]

The February victory swept away the shah's regime — the main obstacle to Iran's social advance. Following it, a new stage had set in, that of struggle for the democratic and anti-imperialist objectives mentioned above. However, there was dual rule for nearly nine months. Functioning in those months along with revolutionary institutions (the Revolutionary Council, courts, committees, guards) was a government pursuing a liberal bourgeois, conciliatory policy. The reason for this was the peculiarity of the previous period, when the leadership of the revolution, which expressed the interests of large sections of the people, and the liberal bourgeoisie, which saw the only evil in autocratic rule, were still at one. And while the liberal bourgeoisie was alarmed by the powerful movement of the masses and ready to compromise with the shah's regime, objective developments compelled it to join the revolutionary forces as a fellow-traveller. But it never succeeded in imposing its conciliatory policy on the revolutionaries, who were staunchly fighting the dictatorial regime. Indeed, it had to make a show of loyalty to the revolutionary leadership and readiness to respect its will. After the February revolution, the administration of public affairs was entrusted to a provisional government composed mostly of advocates of a liberal bourgeois policy. In the very first days of its existence, its head, Mahdi Bazargan, frankly advised against destroying the existing system in the hope of creating a new one. He affirmed that although revolutionary feeling was still running high among the people, his government was "an ordinary government". "We are not a revolutionary government," he stressed.

Our Party defined the class nature of the provisional government later. "This government," said a PPI Central Committee statement, "was not devoted to the Iranian people's big revolution. It personified the conciliatory stand of the liberal bourgeoisie that wanted to prevent the revolution from going beyond their narrow class interests."[2] The Bazargan cabinet set out to protect big business and the rich landowners. It raised obstacles to a quick and thorough purge in the armed forces and state apparatus and to publishing the records of SAVAK, the shah's secret police. The Prime Minister himself and his backers aspired in general to preserve the existing social relations.

The provisional government's weakness, conciliatory policy, and

connivance at reaction gave hope to demoralised and disorganised counter-revolutionary forces, which began to recover from the blows they had received. Former SAVAK agents became active and some counter-revolutionaries ventured back to Iran. The US imperialists believed that the time was ripe for more overt hostile actions against the Iranian revolution. And it was then that the ex-shah was invited to the United States.

The conciliatory policy of the provisional government — a policy that suited foreign and domestic reaction — was an ominous threat to the revolution. The situation called for resolute action by the masses to end this policy. And the revolutionary leadership headed by the Imam[3] made this choice. The provisional government was removed and its functions were, on Khomeini's instructions, taken over by the Revolutionary Council, which consists of all the more important ministers.

On shedding the shackles of the liberal bourgeoisie's conciliatory policy, the revolutionary leadership adopted a firm and explicit line aimed at severing the country's political, economic, and military links with imperialism. The fight against imperialism rose to a new plane. "A most salient feature of the current stage of the Iranian revolution," said Noureddin Kianouri, First Secretary of the PPI Central Committee, in an interview with the Hungarian daily *Nepszabadsag* last January, "is its anti-imperialist, anti-US thrust. Faced with political and economic pressures as well as the undisguised threat of armed intervention by the USA, the Iranian people are building up their anti-imperialist unity from day to day."[4]

The radicalisation of the revolution is seen today in both foreign and domestic policy. The forces in power have declared for an effective solution of economic and financial problems. The Revolutionary Council has instructed the Ministry of Agriculture to settle the agrarian and peasant question and allot land and implements to the landless and land-hungry. The PPI has given these plans its support. We are convinced that these and other progressive measures are paving the way for a more confident transition to the third stage of the revolution, when the social order will be *reorganised* in the working people's interest. This stage will not come until the final results of the struggle between the opposed class forces are known and the fundamental question of the revolution — "Who will win?" — is settled in the people's favour. Then the masses, having set up their government institutions, will be able to ensure the realisation of their hopes and aspirations. But at the moment (this article was written

late in February) a bitter struggle is going on between the forces of revolution and counter-revolution. The issue of who will win is still the order of the day for the revolution.

Conflicting Forces

A feature of the present stage of social development in Iran is that there is growing differentiation in the camp of those who fought against the shah's tyranny. The peasants, workers, white-collar employees, shopkeepers, handicraftsmen, progressive clergymen, intellectuals (teachers and students), lower echelons of the army, and non-commissioned officers want a further deepening of the revolution. But this does not suit the liberal bourgeoisie and its political organisations, the reformists, the "left" opportunists, some counter-revolutionary groups, and elements posing as spokesmen of religion. These forces are out to arrest the revolution and divert it into ordinary bourgeois democratic channels serving the class interests of the bourgeoisie, of the exploiters and oppressors. However, the masses refuse to live in the old way. They flatly reject the idea of an order merely refurbished on the pattern of the old order based on class oppression. They hailed the radicalisation of the revolution and call for radical changes in every sphere of public life, for a consistently anti-imperialist Iran, and the transformation of the country into a mighty bulwark of the national liberation movement.

The alignment of class forces today is characterised by the existence of two internal fronts: revolution and counter-revolution. The revolution has on its side millions of urban and rural working people and the radical petty bourgeoisie. Our Party is an active member of this front pursuing a policy of alliance and criticism and confident that this approach makes it possible to fight for the goals of the revolution more effectively. Our point of departure is that for a relatively long time to come Iran will continue developing along the lines of revolutionary-democratic renewal, which will assure its political and economic independence and pave the way for radical reforms in the working people's interests.

The Iranians know that they are not alone in their heroic struggle. The solidarity shown by the liberation and revolutionary forces of the world and, above all, the staunchness of our people themselves have cut short many attempts to mount imperialist aggression against the Iranian revolution. We have been threatened by US imperialism. But the united will of the Iranian people and the stern warning given by the Soviet Union as far back as the end of 1978 restrained the imperialists and prevented

them from stepping in. Late in 1979, when US-Iranian relations deteriorated again, the imperialists' tendency towards aggression was curbed once more by the resolute actions of the Soviet Union. At the UN Security Council in January 1980 the USSR vetoed the US plan to impose an economic blockade on Iran. The threat to our revolution from without is also countered by other socialist countries and by many independent and progressive nations. The Communist and Worker's parties and the other forces of peace, freedom and democracy are on our side.

However, the threat from without still hangs over the Iranian revolution. US imperialism cannot reconcile iself to its victory, and this stand finds support in West Germany, Britain, and Japan. Our people's enemies include the rulers of Israel and Egypt and the reactionaries of Saudi Arabia and Morocco.

The ex-shah and his family, former cabinet ministers, generals, and a large group of big capitalists and landowners who have fled the country are carrying on a vicious subversive campaign from abroad. To this end they use the large amounts of money earned by the blood and sweat of our people and deposited in foreign banks.

Peking Line

One of the enemies of the Iranian revolution is the present Peking leadership. The fact that Iran, once a US imperialist bastion against national liberation movements and the Soviet Union, has taken the road of freedom and independence does not suit Peking.

The greatest danger is that foreign reaction gives increasing support to the internal counter-revolution, which includes big capitalists and landowners associated with foreign capital, former high-ranking officials of the shah's regime, SAVAK agents, some sections of the army and the bureaucracy, and the reactionary clergy. Maoist groups in Iran are carrying on subversion against the revolution under cover of ultra-left slogans. The political conduct of the liberal bourgeoisie objectively links up more and more with the activity of outspoken enemies of the revolution. Now that the shah's autocratic rule is over, the liberal bourgeoisie is hardly disturbed by the threat of new imperialist bondage. Some liberal bourgeois elements are becoming flunkeys of US imperialism. The latter uses its agents and counter-revolutionary scum to incite counter-revolutionary activity in various parts of Iran and weaken the central revolutionary authority. It provokes unrest by exploiting national and religious differences in Kurdistan, Iranian Azerbaijan, the area inhabited by

Turkmenis (other Iran), Baluchistan, and the south.

The People's Party has always fought national oppression and championed the right of the ethnic minorities to self-rule within a united Iran. Now as before, we favour a search for a just settlement of this burning issue and contribute to correct solutions. Our Party calls on progressives among the ethnic minorities and on the government to work for a peaceful settlement of inter-ethnic problems, such as would meet the interests of the people's liberation revolution while at the same time taking account of the minorities' legitimate right to self-determination.

Counter-revolution, which occasionally uses revolutionary verbiage and the banner of religion, plays the role of US imperialism's Trojan horse. The reactionaries resort to acts of terrorism and subversion, sow panic among the population, and infiltrate their agents into government bodies. Counter-revolutionaries undermine the economy and instigate the working people to resist the revolution. Incidentally, the recent invitation of the shah, a criminal, to the United States was indicative of a steep uptrend in US imperialist plotting against the Iranian revolution and was aimed by US leaders at encouraging Iran's reactionaries to act with greater resolve. After that, US imperialist pressure on Iran grew in every direction. The issues of the hostages being held at the US Embassy in Tehran, who admittedly include many CIA agents, was blown up into a world-wide anti-Iranian campaign. The USA imposed discussion of the so-called Iranian question on the Security Council and sent a large naval force, including aircraft carriers, to waters washing our shores. The USA is resolved to take every possible action to safeguard what it terms are its interests in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. This is President Carter's frank formulation of his doctrine of international brigandage.

Nor is that an empty threat. In fact, US imperialism is the chief organiser of the undeclared war against free Afghanistan, a war involving tens of thousands of mercenaries sent from Pakistan and China.

The imperialists' bellicose ambitions are unlikely to frighten our people, who for a quarter-century fought against the shah's US-bayonet buttressed dictatorship and made enormous sacrifices in the cause of justice and freedom. Ever since our revolution was accomplished. Iran's struggle on the international political scene has been spearheaded against US imperialism. Our people and the leader of the revolution, Imam Khomeini, justly regard US imperialism as the cause of all our hardships and suffering. Imam Khomeini calls it the Big Devil and urges the Iranians to use every means for defeating it. The progressive and revolutionary

forces expose agents and accomplices of imperialism in our society and take steps to head off conspiracies by foreign reaction and the local counter-revolution.

The revolutionary forces adhere to four fundamental guidelines, known as the Imam's line. They are:

— the chief enemy of our revolution is world imperialism led by US imperialism;

— the Iranian revolution is a revolution of people living in hovels against those who live in palaces;

— defend and respect the people's democratic freedoms;

— united action by the revolutionary forces in repulsing the attacks of counter-revolution and defeating its sinister plans.

The People's Party of Iran supports Imam Khomeini's line because it is based on principles consonant with our programme and policy. At the same time, we propose to apply these principles in ways which our analysis has shown to be in harmony with the exigencies of the present stage of the revolution. The PPI stands for uniting the masses on the basis of consistent anti-imperialism, and advances the slogan of a broad popular front employing the unity of all patriotic forces supporting Imam Khomeini's line.

Our Party has no doubt that guaranteeing the people's democratic freedoms and rights is a major condition for the further advance of the revolution. Now as in the past, we readily offer the revolution our experience and knowledge and make constructive proposals serving progressive aims.

A little more than a year has passed since the revolution began and yet the situation in Iran has changed beyond recognition. One of the most tyrannical regimes ever known in human history is gone. The ex-monarch is roaming the world, without finding a haven. Our long-suffering people have passed their sentence on him and his rule.

Achievements

The achievements of the revolution are great. It has dismantled one of the most sinister institutions of the shah's regime, SAVAK. Political parties and organisations, our Party among them, which had contributed enormously to the fight against the neocolonialist dictatorship now function legally. There have been important political developments, such as the referendum on declaring Iran an Islamic Republic, the referendum on the new Constitution, and the presidential elections. They revealed the

people's growing participation in national life. A number of socio-economic transformations have been carried through: large-scale industry, formerly controlled by the imperialists and their Iranian allies, private banks, insurance companies, and the property of the shah's family have been nationalised.

The revolution has dealt imperialism powerful blows. Until very recently Iran was a trusted ally closely cooperating with Israel and racist South Africa; it supplied them with enormous quantities of oil to help their reactionary regimes survive, and suppressed the liberation movement in our region.

New, revolutionary Iran is an ally of the liberation forces of the world. It has committed itself to provide fraternal support to the Arab people of Palestine, established relations with the PLO, denounced the traitorous US-Israeli-Egyptian deal at Camp David, and broken off relations with the Sadat regime. Its attitude on the international scene is actively anti-imperialist, anti-racist, and anti-fascist. Iran is no longer a CENTO member and has repealed many shackling treaties with imperialist powers, including its 1959 military treaty with the United States. Our country has joined the non-aligned movement.

The Iranian people have registered notable gains in liberation battles and inflicted telling reverses on the counter-revolution and its foreign patrons. The counter-revolutionary attempts to provoke an internecine war have failed, in the main. The masses have condemned the conciliatory line of the liberal bourgeoisie. They deeply abhor the old order. They have learnt to tell friend from foe better than before, and they now see who is really loyal to the revolution in Iran itself and is their ally in the international arena. All this gives us historical optimism and makes us confident of the radiant future of our country. At the same time, the Iranian people are aware that much remains to be done to consolidate the revolution.

Notes

1. For details of this stage of the revolution, see Noureddin Kianouri, First Secretary of the PPI Central Committee, "Start of a New Stage of the People's Revolution", in WMR, April 1979.
2. *Mardom*, November 7, 1979.
3. Title now used in reference to Ayatollah Khomeini. — *Ed.*
4. *Nepszabadsag*, January 19, 1980.

IS THERE A PLACE FOR BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS?

by Tau ya Mogale

The evil practice of racism in South Africa has been going on for nearly three and a half centuries. From the time of arrival of the Boer settlers and the British settlers in 1652 and 1820 respectively and the subsequent conquest of our land, all its wealth and the cruel subjugation of its people, power has been shifting between these two groups of colonialists. The exercise of this power has often taken a violent form. The discovery of diamonds in Kimberley and of gold on the Reef only intensified the lust for overall monopoly conquest of our wealth. From 1899 to 1902 a violent imperialist war took place between these foreign bandits and plunderers.

Amidst these colonial feuds, conflicts and controversies for domination, our people's will for resistance remained undiminished. This is evidenced by the glorious anti-poll tax rebellion of 1905-1906 led by Bambata where our people once more rose up arms in hand against the conquest and plunder of their land. It was no wonder that in 1910 the Boer and British settlers joined hands to present a unified albeit unequal anti-people unity of all provinces conquered by force of arms. By so doing, they not only institutionalised capitalism to grow by means of the super-exploitation of

the Africans as workers, but effectively also excluded them from participation in decision-making parliamentary processes by limiting voting rights to whites only etc.

This racism has always been with us, since our conquest, and did not start with the invention of the concept of apartheid. It was therefore an historic milestone when our movement, the African National Congress, was founded to unite all sections of the black nation and foster a feeling of nationhood so as to recapture political power. This call was summarised in the words of Pixley ka Seme who said at the time:

> "The demon of racialism, the aberrations of the Xhoza-Fingo feud, the animosity that exists between the Zulus and the Tongas, between the Basuto and every other Native must be buried and forgotten. We are one people. These diversions, these jealousies, are the cause of all our woes and all our backwardness and ignorance today."

A similar call to the workers was made a few years later by the International Socialist League:

> "Let there be no longer any talk of Basuto, Zulu or Shangaan. You are all labourers. Let Labour be your common bond. Deliver yourself from the chains of capitalism."

The Effects of Capitalism

It is therefore not surprising that such a long period of racial discrimination and brutal super-exploitation has led to a strong feeling that only the assertion of our nationhood can serve the return of our land and its wealth. The potential of African nationalism as a social force for revolutionary change has its historic roots and is still evident to this day. The simple truth is that the Africans are oppressd as a nation — through the intensification of Bantustans (called reserves in the past) and the division of our people into tribal groupings to facilitate their continuous super-exploitation as workers. Therefore, the identity of both class and national oppression and exploitation of the Africans is embodied in the fact that the black man is exploited not only as a worker but also because of his colour according to the South African apartheid laws which set him aside from the rest of the people for super-exploitation.

Of course the Africans are not the sole force for revolutionary change. The Coloured and Indian communities are also the victims of racial discrimination and exploitation. Even within the white community it is actually only a small fraction that fully enjoys the total fruits of exploitation and racist practices. Nevertheless the white workers get wages five to ten times higher than those received by the African workers, while

in furtherance of the regime's divide and rule policy, the Indian and Coloured workers are somewhere in between. And only the Africans are forced to carry a dompass, which they regard as a symbol of slavery.

If we are to avoid a racialist response to a racialist attack, we have to understand the causes of the consciousness and political thinking of its victims, especially at their initial moment of rebellion and national re-awakening. This has become necessary owing to the emergence of black consciousness movements and the need to examine their validity in permanent organisational forms in the context of the South African revolution. We have to see whether the philosophies they espouse, however militant they may sound, do in the long run serve the basic interest of our people.

The philosophy of black consciousness is in its totality a reflection of the ravages of apartheid on the lives and minds of our people. In essence it is a patriotic attempt to articulate the aspirations of the vast majority of the people. Inevitably in a social environment which is hostile to and punishes the expression of their past experiences and struggles, this has led to haphazard formulations of philosophies which will not solve the real problems confronting the people. The mental and physical isolation of our people, the appalling social conditions under which they live, the censorship and the bannings of people, literature and organisations like the ANC have led to distortions in thinking among sections of our people. Steve Biko said in *I Write What I Like:*

> "My friendships, my love, my education, my thinking and every other facet of my life has been curved and shaped within the context of separate development".

Black consciousness is defined as

> "the realisation by the black of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their oppression — the blackness (?) of their skins — and to operate as a group in order to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude".

Of course this call to unity is very important in combating the enemy's divisive policies. But do not let us forget that it was voiced by the ANC 68 years ago, and consistently repeated by them in the ensuing years. It is part and parcel of the philosophy of the liberation movement, which has extended the definition of black to cover Coloured and Indians. Steve Biko said that merely by describing yourself as black you have started on a road towards emancipation, but added that it would be wrong to build an impression that there is total exclusion of the whites even in this

philosophy. Whites have got to regard themselves either as part of the problem or as part of the solution. Of course there is a sharp contrast when it comes to co-option of whites in these various black consciousness organisations and structures.

Reaction to Oppression

The philosophy of being black and proud is a reaction to white domination and oppression. Steve Biko also condemned the reactionary role of white "liberals" because "they are claiming a monopoly of intelligence and moral judgement and setting a pattern and pace for the realisation of the black man's aspirations". But one cannot dismiss the whole white community so simply. We will continue to witness the Bram Fischers, the Kitsons, Goldbergs and Helen Josephs. And amongst the blacks we will continue to witness the Matanzimas, Sebes, Mphephus who are joining hands with the oppressors against the oppressed.

There are many contradictions between the black consciousness philosophy (black people must come together) and its organisational content (students forming the vast majority of the organisations and intellectuals leading them). There is a contradiction between the projected means of change (conferences attended mostly by intellectuals) and the desired aims (national liberation). Liberation has to be an act of the whole people. This is why some internal organisations lay false claim to command the majority of the people — they appear to be ignorant or suppressive of the record of struggle of that majority over the years. It would be proper for the patriots of our country to commend the various black consciousness organisations showing themselves capable of mass action (eg PEBCO) without laying claim to a majority support.

Whilst it is a matter of record that various black consciousness organisations played an important role in raising the political awareness amongst the youth and students, it is also clear from the Soweto rebellions and the pro-Frelimo rallies three years earlier that these organisations have severe limitations because of the low level of experience and the absence of adequate strategies and tactics of revolution. Above all they have no contact with the broad masses of the oppressed people — although lately one has noticed some of the exile circles of black consciousness advocating the inclusion of working class elements, while still excluding Coloured and Indian workers, not to mention some sections of the white working class. The fact is that these organisations have no working class content.

The ANC has never developed a chauvinistic super-revolutionary

syndrome and has always respected the contribution of the black consciousness organisations, although it has always been subjected to attacks from the disgruntled elements in the PAC and within some of the black consciousness organisations abroad. A clear distinction must be drawn between those who attack the ANC for purposes of vindicating their own inactivity and irrelevance within the liberation process, and those whose false criticism arises from misinformation and misguidance which has detached them from the parent body in our struggle, the ANC. The continuous printing of such magazines as *Ikwezi* and *Maluti* by some frustrated renegades is an indication of grave confusion in their ranks as to who is the real enemy. History will pass judgement on this.

ANC Statement

In 1973, the NEC of the ANC issued a statement dealing with the situation inside SA. Amongst other things, the statement noted:

> "In the last few years, for example, there has come into being a number of black organisations whose programmes, by espousing the democratic anti-racist position that the ANC fights for, identify them as part of the genuine forces of the revolution. . ."

This statement remains true to this day. The ANC's statement continues to note:

> "The speed of a column on the march is determined by the pace of the slowest and the weakest soldier and not the fittest and fastest. The most advanced sections should, therefore, at all times, seek to advance the least developed ones, keeping in the forefront the principle of the greatest and highest unity of the peoples and at all times fighting all tendencies of seeking to 'go it alone' through impatience and contempt for the less developed forces of the revolution."

The enemy seeks to encourage disunity and fratricidal strife and jealousies through the spreading of lies, calumny and distortion about the honesty and ability of the leadership and members of the liberation alliance. An aspect of this divisive strategy, perhaps, is the mushrooming of black consciousness organisations both inside and outside South Africa. The main aim is to detach the younger generation from the older and more experienced one.

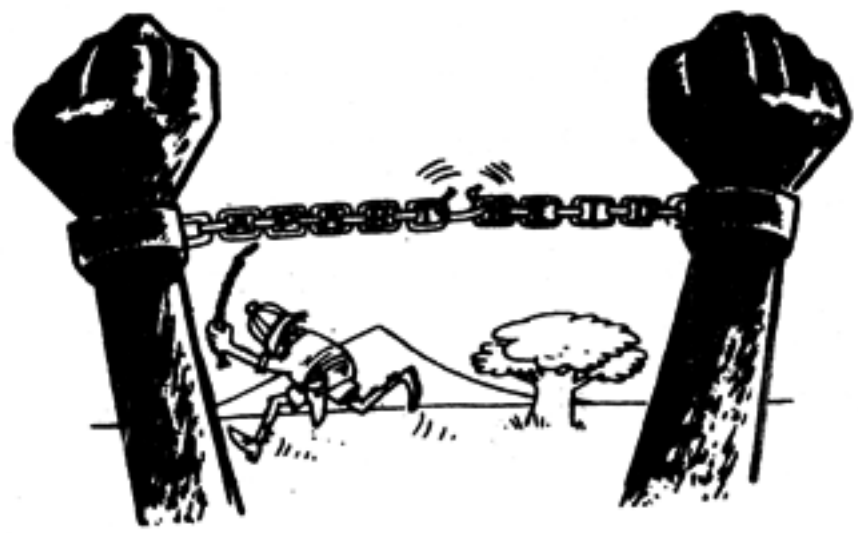
Some of these organisations accuse the ANC of being dominated by whites and communists. One can understand people who are seething with anger because of white oppression in their own country or racial practices in their country of exile reacting violently to all contact with racists. To them, joining hands with non-racial organisations like the ANC or the CP is a departure from principle. It is bound to take time for these people to

come to a sober realisation of the real forces of revolution, and to understand that insistence on the policy that the black man must "go it alone" is theoretically nihilistic, anti-historical, practically unrealistic and a sure way to exile oneself from the real roots of our plight.

The declaration that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, was not imposed, historically, on the people. They themselves declared this reality 25 years ago when the Freedom Charter was adopted. This understanding, this process is irreversible. The liberation alliance by adopting this policy has made it possible to integrate all revolutionary forces in the fight for freedom. Henry Winston, chairman of the US Communist Party, said in his book *Class, Race and Black Liberation:*

> "What is required to achieve class unity is a fight to wipe out every form of material and social inequality. And white workers have a heavy responsibility in this struggle because it is they who have been infected by racism and who are consequently its 'bearers' within the multi-racial working class. Marxism-Leninism is a guide to, not a substitute for the anti-racist struggle and therefore a guide also to the fraternity of the working class".

The psychological handicap incurred because of racism will begin to be replaced by enlightenment, the acceptance of racial equality. The anti-racist struggle therefore cannot be an end in itself but is an important means of inter-relating both the class and national forces in the execution of the struggle for freedom.



The Immediate Task of our Movement

ARMED STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

by "Comrade Mzala"

In this period of struggle the urgent task of our movement is to inject into the masses of our people a feeling of confidence in their own potential to overthrow the racists, by means of vigorous revolutionary action, the main content of which must be effective and sustained guerrilla operations including a nation-wide sabotage campaign reminiscent of the early sixties, and thus continue from where Rivonia left off.

This does not mean that we must go and grab guns and start fighting tomorrow, anywhere. The Marxist theory of revolution differs from all other theories in the remarkable way 'it combines complete scientific sobriety in the analysis of the objective state of affairs and the objective course of evolution with the most emphatic recognition of the importance of revolutionary energy, revolutionary creative genius and revolutionary initiative of the masses'[1]

Certainly, we must severely criticise the adventuristic theories of the Narodnik type which completely separate the subjective factor from the real objective conditions that prevail. My stress, however, on the role of armed struggle at this critical stage of our revolution is a deliberate

approach that reflects the new requirements of the movement at a time when conditions have become ripe for vigorous armed revolution. It would therefore be wrong for the reader to draw a conclusion from the article that armed activity alone can accomplish a revolution in South Africa irrespective of the objective political situation and in disregard of other forms of political struggle. These propositions are advanced not on mere theoretical consideration but on practical considerations — and as always, practice is the test of theory.

Lenin taught that while soberly taking into account objective conditions, one should not forget that 'in revolutionary times the limits of what is possible expand a thousand fold'[2] under the powerful impact of the mass historical action. It should be said in all fairness and truth that each year, indeed each month, that the liberation of South Africa is speeded up will mean the lives of millions of undernourished children saved from starvation; hundreds saved from detention, torture and the hangman's noose; an infinite quantity of pain spared the people. In the words of the founders of Umkhonto We Sizwe: "The time for small thinking is over because history leaves us no choice."[3]

Formation of Umkhonto We Sizwe

Slovo, summing up the conditions that dictated the historic decision to form Umkhonto We Sizwe in December 1961, states:

> "By then the strategy of mass struggle along non-violent lines had exhausted its potential for mobilising the people. The regime had turned to the use of undisguised terror against all militant opposition to race rule; the liberation organisations had been outlawed. The facts had put paid to any lingering illusions that radical change could be won by action which did not include armed activity".[4]

The Manifesto of MK declared:

> "We are striking out along a new road for the liberation of the people of this country. The Government policy of force, repression and violence will no longer be met with non-violent resistance only! The choice is not ours; it has been made by the Nationalist Government which has rejected every peaceable demand by the people for rights and freedom and answered every such demand with force and yet more force."

That therefore the time had come in 1961 to answer racist violence with revolutionary people's violence can no longer be a debated question. The above-quoted passage of the MK Manifesto clearly reflects that the decision to embark on armed struggle was arrived at after great consideration and deliberations. Further than that, it is a proof in itself

that Umkhonto We Sizwe at such an infant stage, having hardly any serious material resources to talk about, operating in a highly industrialised capitalist-totalitarian state that was surrounded by hostile states, could manage to conduct more than 150 acts of sabotage during a period of only 18 months. These dramatic acts of revolutionary assault, which grew in intensity and scope with each passing month, are proof enough that the majority of the people 1) were already disillusioned with the prospect of achieving liberation by non-violent means, and 2) were ready to respond to the call for armed struggle.

In the light of these conditions the prosecution of military struggle depends for its success on two factors viz., the existence of clear leadership with material resources at its disposal to spark off and sustain military operations, and the strength of the enemy.

Those who criticise the so-called failure of the sabotage campaign of the early sixties by citing as a proof the final arrest of the leadership at Rivonia and thus try to prove that the time had not yet come, should be aware that they would have, in the similar fashion and probably for the same reasons, criticised Fidel Castro in Cuba if his guerilla band had failed to sustain themselves in the Sierra Maestra. After all, the technical security mistake which resulted in the arrest of the leadership in Rivonia was about to be solved with the initial implementation of the draft document "Operation Mayibuye", one passage of which reads thus:

> "Before the operations take place, political authority will have been set up in secrecy in a friendly territory with a view to supervise the struggle both in its internal and external aspects."

It should be noted that the Rivonia arrest took place before the implementation of "Operation Mayibuye."

Although we know that victory in South Africa is certain, our founding fathers could not afford in 1961 to sit in the doorways of their houses waiting for the corpse of apartheid to pass by. They understand, in the same way as Marx put it in a letter to Dr Kugelman, that "world history would indeed by very easy to make if the struggle were taken up on condition of infallible favourable chances."

Then there are those who argue that a revolutionary situation is always a prerequisite of the armed struggle, and that the contrary is left-wing childishness and adventurism. In so doing they make use of quotations from Lenin who once wrote: "To Marxists it is indisputable that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation: furthermore, it is not every revolutionary situation that leads to revolution."[5] On another

occasion Lenin said: "Oppression alone, no matter how great, does not always give rise to a revolutionary situation in a country."[6]

These texts have been misunderstood greatly, and at times applied dogmatically out of context. Many a vanguard movement has historically doomed itself to political death — continued to exist but ceased to live — by waiting passively for the moment when the revolutionary situation appears and a nation-wide crisis breaks out. What is a revolutionary situation? Should guerrilla struggle wait for the revolutionary situation?

The Problem of Revolutionary Situation

Lenin developed the concept 'revolutionary situation' mostly during the First World War, when there appeared signs that a revolutionary situation was maturing in a number of European countries. He was describing the state of society preceding the politically mature revolution. His conclusions were the result of a thorough study of the specific experience of the Russian revolution of 1905-07. Initially he did not use the term 'revolutionary situation' but used the term 'political crisis on a nationwide scale' and others. At no stage did he say that armed struggle cannot begin until there is a revolutionary situation. For instance he wrote:

> "What, generally speaking, are the symptoms of a revolutionary situation? We shall certainly not be mistaken if we indicate the following three major symptoms: (1) When it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis in one form or another, among the 'upper classes', a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for the 'lower classes not to want' to live in the old way; it is also necessary that 'the upper classes should be unable' to live in the old way; (2) when the suffering and want of the oppressed classes have grown more acute than usual; (3) when, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in 'peacetime' but, in turbulent times, are drawn both by all the circumstances of the crisis and by the 'upper classes' themselves into independent historical action . . . the totality of all these objective changes is called a revolutionary situation."[7]

The vulgarisation of Lenin's theses on the revolutionary situation has practically meant that all the vanguard movement should do is to accumulate weapons and manpower in the country while waiting for the D-day when we will be strong enough to meet the revolutionary situation. Experience of other countries like Algeria, Cuba, Angola, on the contrary,

shows that guerrilla struggle can bring about a revolutionary situation. Nowadays, this is more so because the liberation forces have at their disposal an advantage (which the Russian revolutionaries never had), that is, the existence of a socialist community which is committed to the principles of proletarian internationalism. In fascist countries like South Africa, therefore, an open struggle of the guerrillas supported by the people will certainly speed up the development of a revolutionary situation to its highest phase — the nation-wide crisis.

After the above analysis, the question that assumes tremendous importance is one of political mobilisation of the masses.

Political Mobilisation

Armed struggle is the highest form of political struggle, demanding as it does greater sacrifice from the people. It is important to emphasise this because any manifestation of militarism which separates armed people's struggle from its political context can result in untold tragedy and disaster and can, in our specific situation, set our movement decades back, if not cause its total collapse.

The policy of the African National Congress is very clear on this question:

> ". . . the people's armed challenge against a foe with formidable material strength does not achieve dramatic and swift success. The path is filled with obstacles and we harbour no illusions on this score in the case of South Africa. In the long run it can only succeed if it attracts the active support of the mass of the people. Without this lifeblood it is doomed."

No matter how skilful or courageous our guerrilla units can be, the lack of mass support could mean their doom. An example of this is the struggle of the people of the Philippines. William Pomeroy, a contemporary Marxist and expert on revolutionary armed struggle, who has himself participated in the guerrilla struggle of the people of the Philippines, sounds this warning note:

> "Broad and universal generalisations about the efficacy of armed struggle or guerrilla tactics cannot safety be made."[9]

But how do you practically mobilise the people now in South Africa? Do you go from man to man inviting him to join the ANC? Or do you remind him that he is oppressed by law A, B and C? Surely, as the struggle sharpens and intensifies, political mobilisation will take the form of all-round educational and agitational work — for it can only be when the enemy is

harassed and his forces dispersed and therefore weakened that effective propaganda by our underground units as well as armed combatants can mobilise the masses to a higher stage of organisation. Let us not forget that armed propaganda, particularly at this initial stage, is in itself a politically mobilising factor.

Slovo is correct when he observes that:

> "Experience of South Africa and other highly organised police states has shown that, until the new type of action is started, it is doubtful whether political mobilisation and organisation can be developed beyond a certain point. Given the disillusionment of the people with the old forms of struggle, a demonstration of the liberation movement's capacity to meet and sustain the struggle in a new way is in itself a vital way of attracting organised allegiance and support. Therefore, postponing all armed activity until political mobilisation and organisational reconstruction have reached a high enough level to sustain its more advanced forms would undermine the prospects of full political mobilisation itself."[10]

The above-quoted passage is in the same tone as the preamble of "Operation Mayibuye" which emphasised in revolutionary optimism that in the initial stage "the plan envisages a massive onslaught on pre-selected targets which will create maximum havoc and confusion in the enemy camp" and which will inject into the masses of the people a feeling of confidence that "here at least is an army of liberation equipped and capable of leading them to victory," This then will create the proper atmosphere for a gradual mass participation in their own armed revolution.

The question of political mobilisation cannot be treated in the abstract. As in Algeria, Cuba and other places, the general uprising will be sparked off by organised and well equipped guerrilla operations during the course of which the masses of the people will be drawn in and armed. The fascist ghost is still haunting our people. The ghost is clothed in the myth of invincibility. A serious challenge to this myth by a demonstration of people's armed victories, however small, will shatter the myth — and such slogans as "The Law Has A Long Hand", "Walls Have Ears" will become meaningless and proved to be a mere threat. In terms of political mobilisation of the masses, such MK operations as the Soweto Police Station Assaults are ideal operations, not necessarily because of their offensive nature but because of their victorious nature. The presence of casualties on our side will only be a natural development, but certainly not a deliberate one; the operating law at this stage is: "shamelessly attack the weak and shamelessly flee from the strong."[11]

The Strength of the Enemy

We would be indulging in daydreaming if we disputed the considerable military advantages the Pretoria Boers have at this stage of our revolution, that is, their rich economy (which already finances a huge aggression budget), a large army and police, high level of industrialisation and the modern roads and railways which facilitate transport to any part of the country.

The "Strategy and Tactics of the ANC" correctly states, however, that

> "If there is one lesson that the history of guerrilla struggle has taught it is that the material strength and resources of the enemy is by no means a decisive factor."

Guerrilla warfare by its very definition is meant to be advantageous (in the long run) to the materially weak against the materially strong, and its success is guaranteed by its popular origin and its popular support. So that therefore, no matter how strong is the enemy force, skilful exercise of guerrilla tactics like surprise, mobility and tactical retreat should make it difficult for the enemy to bring into play its superior fire-power in any decisive battles. The need for the racist soldiers to stretch themselves to protect every inch of the lines of communication and the need to protect the widely scattered installations on which the economy is dependent, will make it impossible for them to be in the borders of the country, to be in Namibia and Zimbabwe as well as in the streets shooting the workers when they are on strike. Remove the element of armed struggle in the South African revolution, and the racists will be found in all the above-mentioned places.

Against an enemy of the strength of South Africa, it is only logical for the liberation forces to plan for a protracted war; the contrary would be to entertain disaster. It should be noted however that the very complexity and sophistication of the South African industrial complex makes it vulnerable to effective guerrilla attacks against economic targets, and within a short period (probably far sooner than we can at the moment envisage) great havoc and confusion can plague the country, and thus bring near the revolutionary insurrection for seizure of power — provided, of course, that our movement is ready for such an eventuality.

The Existence of Leadership and Material Resources

To accomplish a revolution there must be real forces and ripe subjective conditions. The subjective conditions for the revolution exist when the progressive forces have the ability to take conscious revolutionary action

with a view to overthrowing the old system and establishing a new one. If there are no such forces, the moment may be lost — if the subjective forces are insufficiently ripe, the revolution will suffer defeat. In concrete terms, the existence of a clear leadership (by clear leadership I mean those leaders who are the genuine representatives of the working people not only in theory but in actuality) with material resources at its disposal to spark off and sustain operations is an imperative. That the operations have to be sustained is absolutely imperative because spontaneous, isolated action (no matter how well-meaning) is not enough to achieve victory in the revolution. It is vital that the movement demonstrate that it has come to stay. Only then can it give the people confidence and the ability to see possibilities.

Isolated and unco-ordinated activities finally play into the hands of the enemy who tries to deceive the people that the guerrillas are a scared, desperate and gangster-like lot who are afraid of the state security forces. An isolated action in a country like South Africa, for instance, is easily drowned in the daily sensational issues in the country many of which are created by criminal gangs.

An assessment of the maturity of the subjective factors at this stage of the revolution must ascertain not only the readiness of the vanguard movement and its political leadership, but also the material possibilities to sustain the struggle till the masses are able to shift from being mere supporters to being active participants in the revolution. The latter factor, because of its mechanical nature, is very easy to ascertain and also to provide (given the presence of the socialist community as well as the enemy resources within the country), but the former can only be tested in practice and not only in theory — for only practice is the criterion of truth. Political forces of revolution are formed and tested in the flames of political struggle on the basis of practical experience accumulated by the masses. The masses themselves are genuinely organised by the struggle itself. Lenin said:

> "The real education of the masses can never be separated from their political and especially revolutionary struggle. Only struggle educates the exploited class. Only the struggle discloses to it the magnitude of its own power; widens its horizon, enhances its abilities, clarifies its mind, forges its will."[12]

He went further to point out that boundless revolutionary enthusiasm of the people opens up new historical horizons, and sets the movement new great tasks (tasks which drawing-room revolutionaries dare not even dream of). Times of revolution then become distinguished by fast rates of

development; history is then measured not in years and decades but in weeks and even days. It is only under such circumstances that the slogan: 'Freedom In Our Lifetime' becomes valid to the masses.

Soweto and our Era

The political events which have occurred in South Africa in the period since June 16, 1976, have once again convinced the overwhelming majority of the people that armed resistance and military offensive operations by the people's army are necessary to bring about the collapse of the racist regime.

This can be seen from the offensive mood of the Soweto youth and their colleagues elsewhere in the country, carrying stones and dustbin lids. In Soweto, unlike in Sharpeville, those who died did not have their wounds at the back fleeing from police terror, but died while advancing against the racist monster. The very preparedness of the people to undertake suicidal offensive campaigns of the Soweto type is a clear indication of the revolutionary militancy that is at present gripping their hearts.

Our people have no other path to liberation than that of armed struggle. To think otherwise would be to engage in a lifeless theoretical discussion lacking all practical signficance. It was with these considerations in mind that the Central Committee of the SACP, in analysing Soweto immediately after the events, noted: "SOWETO has closed the debate about the legitimacy of resorting to the armed struggle."[13] Similarly the National Executive Committee of the ANC declared 1979 the Year of the Spear – not without reason.

Footnotes

1. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol.13 p.36
2. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol.23 p.323
3. "Operation Mayibuye" (A draft document)
4. Davidson, Slovo and Wilkinson, *Southern Africa: The New Politics of Revolution,* p.180
5. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol.21 p.213
6. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol.19 p.221
7. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol.21 p.213-14
8. Strategy and Tactics of the African National Congress.
9. William Pomeroy, *Guerrilla Warfare and Marxism,* p.31
10. Davidson, Slovo and Wilkinson, *Southern Africa: The New Politics of Revolution,* p.194
11. "Operation Mayibuye" (A draft document)
12. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol.23 p.241
13. Political Report Adopted by the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party, April 1977.

AFRICA NOTES & COMMENT

by Vukani Mawethu

Liberia: Fruits of "humanistic capitalism"

President William Tolbert was assassinated early on Saturday, April 12, during a coup that was staged by non-commissioned officers calling themselves the People's Redemption Council and led by Sergeant Samuel Doe. President Tolbert was shot three times in the head when the "rebels" broke into the palace at 1.00 a.m.

Sergeant Doe, 28, said the coup had become necessary because of rampant corruption in the country and the Government's failure to handle the affairs of the Liberian people effectively. The task of the uprising was the release of all the members of the People's Progressive Party — the sole opposition party, whose leaders had been under arrest on charges of treason and sedition.

President Tolbert, 66, current chairman of the OAU and a Baptist minister, succeeded to the presidency in 1971 on the death of William Tubman, who had dominated Liberian politics for more than 40 years.

This is the first coup in Africa's oldest republic, a country that has been

ruled almost continuously by the True Whig Party since its foundation by freed black American slaves in 1847.

Historical Background

The "settlers", that is the "brothers and sisters returning from slavery" in the US, landed in 1821. This meant the beginning of the "settler-native" conflict. Ethnic politics have been characteristic of Liberia since then. The first period was one of clear-cut settler domination supported once or twice by US military force against "native unrest". There was even "colour discrimination" among the settlers since the white mulattos controlled the successive Liberian Governments from the regime of the first President, Joseph Jenkins Roberts, up to the end of the administration of the Fourth President, James Spriggs Payne, in 1970. Even the national motto (now controversial) indicates this settler mentality: "The Love of Liberty Brought us Here".

The "settler population" (Americo-Liberians) was estimated at 23,478 out of a population of 998,834 in 1962 (in 1977 the population was estimated at 1,601,000). In other words, Liberia is an African version of the US slave society. Even the voting law, which is unfair and backward, stipulates that only those who own property can vote. But the question arises: who owns Liberia? Is it the property owners or all the people of Liberia? The labels "native" and "settler" are convenient slogans for what can more accurately be described as class interest, hence the co-option through marriage or political patronage of some "natives".

In other words one can say that the dominant section of the ruling class is composed of descendants of ex-slaves from the US and that brain-washing has been so intense that many of the ex-slaves adopted the same interests and habits as their slave masters.

Politics of the Coup

The crisis started during the Easter strikes (April 14, 1979) when the army and the police shot 49 people dead (some estimates say 100) and wounded more than 600. Tolbert denounced these race riots as the work of "hooligans possibly inspired by events in other parts of the world." The damage was estimated at £20 million. The immediate cause of the events was a proposal to increase the price of rice at a time of rising living costs.

The strikes, which were followed by a growing militancy, were led by Gabriel Bacchus Matthews, who had formed the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PLA) among students in the US where he spent most of his time

until 1978. The Progressive Alliance of Liberia has been in existence in Liberia for two years — it was formed around 1974 and has been operating in Liberia since 1978. Towards the end of 1979 it transformed itself into the Progressive People's Party and was officially registered in December 1979.

On March 7, 1980, the Progressive People's Party called for a general strike "to overthrow the Government". After a march on the executive mansion on March 8, about 80 Progressive Party leaders were arrested, as well as a number of army officers.

It should be remembered that strikes are legal in Liberia only when called by labour unions for labour grievances and in pursuance of labour disputes. Any opposition party that calls for a general strike "to topple the government" is open to charges of sedition and treason because the ruling party identified its interests with those of the "nation-state". (Sedition is punishable by up to 10 years' imprisonment while treason carries a death sentence.)

Poverty and Politics

Apart from mayoral, local and chieftaincy elections, the next Presidential elections in Liberia were scheduled for 1983. Despite the rising prices and rising unemployment, the True Whig Party Government committed itself to defending Liberia's "reputation" as a "haven of political and social peace".. This was understandable in the absence of any opposition: opposition to President Tubman's third term of office coalesced in 1955 around former President Edwin Barclay whose Independent True Whig Party was outlawed and violently disbanded following presidential elections which Barclay charged had been rigged.

The Tolbert Government was faced with enormous problems: disturbances at Bong Mines, Maryland County factory and at Sinoe County; refusal by the workers to pay taxes; the major export commodity — iron ore which accounted for 55.4 per cent of the nation's total exports last year, followed by rubber with 15.1 per cent and logs and sawn timber with 12.7 per cent — is facing a critical world recession on the world market; agricultural products such as cocoa, coffee and palm products are also severely affected. In Liberia there is 90 per cent illiteracy.

These factors affected party politics in Liberia which tended to revolve around individuals. There was no mass political participation. All parties have been from the ruling class which identified with individuals and not with mass aspirations or particular programmes. Tolbert's family has been

very active in ownership of business and perhaps this explains the "secret" visit to Liberia by the then Prime Minister of racist South Africa, Vorster, in 1975 and the reports that Tolbert, the OAU chairman, had a visit from Jonas Savimbi of UNITA for a few days in December 1979, as well as Tolbert's visit last year to Britain to discuss the Rhodesia situation. There is some evidence that South Africa used Liberia as a channel for its goods to Africa.

The True Whig Party of Tolbert has just held its first congress in over 100 years. But this congress could not solve the problems confronting the nation e.g. inefficient management, oppressive school officials, exploitative landlords and landowners, ruthless tax-collectors etc. The economy has changed from the "high-growth-and-no-development" type of economy to a "no-growth-and-still-no-development" type of economy. The slow down of foreign investment and a marked increase in luxury projects were due to reliance on foreign investment, trade and aid, and this in turn resulted in underdevelopment. Unemployment and the lack of democratic institutions which permit mass participation in decisions about work are a result of the activities of multinational corporations.

The deterioration in the political climate in Liberia manifested itself in the arrest of three student leaders of the University of Liberia who were charged with sedition for presenting a letter to President Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone (through the Sierra Leonese Embassy in Monrovia) expressing solidarity with the students of Njala University College, Sierra Leone, who were on strike.

The Minister of Sports and President of the Liberia National Olympic Games Association, Mr Estrada G. Bernard, was reported as having said that Liberia would boycott the Olympic Games in Moscow.

But of course there are many forces in the Liberian society. Besides the Progressive People's Party there is also the Movement for Justice in Africa led by Dr Togba-Nah Tipoteh and Susukuu – a sister organisation formed in 1971 to cater for "self-help" projects.

What actually was happening in Liberia in the last two years was that the ruling circles were trying to impose a "Senegalese type" solution, that is limitation by constitutional amendment of the number of legal parties to a "government approved opposition", leaving out the most threatening opposition. But the scheme seems not to have worked. And we should remember that the CIA activities have been strong in Liberia, especially after the "loss" of Ethiopia.

Many questions remain to be answered: What forces were behind the

assassination of William Tolbert? What programme have the young army men to offer the toilers of Liberia? Are these the fruits of "humanistic capitalism" about which so much was said in Liberia before the coup?

Chad: Militarism in N'Djamena

At the time of writing heavy fighting was going on in the capital of Chad, N'Djamena. The city is split in two: the main hospital is overwhelmed with casualties. More than 1,500 people were killed (and some died in hospital where Red Cross doctors are operating) and 2,000 wounded. In addition some 200,000 people had fled to Cameroon and the entire white population of 780 had either flown home or gone into hiding.

There is in N'Djamena a shortage of bed space, medicines and bandages. Water supplies are inadequate and much of it is being taken from swimming pools left by the refugee white population.

Battle Lines Drawn

The battle lines divide President Goukouni Oueddei from his former Muslim ally, the Defence Minister, Hissene Habre. The President's troops control the northern area and most of the city's administrative buildings including the airport, and also protect the French military base where 1,100 French soldiers are said to be guarding the Europeans still in Chad and their properties.

The Defence Minister, Hissene Habre; controls the southern area. Heavy artillery fire and regular shelling characterise the life in the city whose two main forces total about 3,000 men.

What is the cause for this seemingly wanton loss of life?

The transitional government of National Unity mandated President Goukouni Oueddei to negotiate the withdrawal of French troops from Chad as envisaged in a peace agreement signed in Lagos last August. The cabinet authorised President Oueddei to set up a special committee with powers to negotiate with the French authorities on the practical details of the withdrawal.

It seems the decision to press for the departure of the French troops followed the arrival of about 800 Congolese troops as a first part of a neutral African force, an all African peace-keeping force. Similar

contingents were to arrive from Benin and Guinea. The Congolese troops have since been flown home.

It is said about 2,000 prisoners of war were being held in Chad by various armed forces — some with their families who have joined them. Most prisoners are in the north, centre and east of the country. In January nearly 200 people were freed and repatriated by the International Red Cross.

There was also a quarrel over an earlier broadcast by the Command Council of the Northern Armed Forces (CCFAN) led by Hissene Habre. President Goukouni Oueddei criticised parts of this broadcast which were critical of a visit of the Libyan Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ali Triki. The broadcast followed a clash in N'Djamena between elements of the Northern Armed Forces, blamed the incident on a "plot hatched in Libya" and linked it to the Libyan Foreign Minister's visit. The Libyan Foreign Minister, President Oueddei explained, had been invited "to enable us to convey our point of view and to seek together means of peacefully resolving differences between Chad and Libya."

We learn also that the four French Air Force Jaguar fighters stationed in N'Djamena have left the Chad capital where they have been for several months, and it is further reported that the commander of the French forces in Chad, General Pierre de Quenco Tonquerec, had been discreetly replaced by colonel Lardy. But it seems the General was to be posted to the 2nd Parachute Division specialising in "emergency overseas interventions".

Chad has many problems. Scores of civil servants pressed together in packed queues on January 3 to get their first salaries since July, 1979. The money (49.5m francs or $12.3m) came from France as emergency aid sent to keep the administration of this former French colony going after months of civil strife that saw the destruction or pillage of many government offices. Hearing of the "August pay" a huge crowd of functionaries arrived at dawn in front of the National Treasury, waving cash tickets which they had held for months without being able to cash them.

There is also the question of restoring Chad's civil war-ravaged economy and administration. The N'Djamena Government is seeking French and US aid to exploit oil reserves, to develop the Sedigi (Lake Chad) oilfield and to build a refinery at N'Djamena fed by pipeline. Chad is hoping to realise the project in collaboration with a consortium consisting of Continental Oil Company (Conoco) which has sole rights to Chad oil production, ESSO, Chevron and Shell. Finance would be from institutions such as the World Bank and the Arab Bank for African Development.

In the meantime it has been reported that Air Afrique airline lost 700m francs CFA ($3.45m) in 1979 largely due to the civil war in Chad i.e. 11 per cent drop in passenger traffic in the Central African region. (The airline created in 1961 is owned by Benin, the Central African Republic, the Congo, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Mauretania, Niger, Senegal, Chad, Togo and the French airline UTA.)

Tensions Increase

Tension has increased in N'Djamena. It is not for the first time — outbursts have become familiar in Chad over the past year.

The demilitarisation of the city, scheduled for February 5, has been put back for the fourth consecutive time, previous setbacks being in March, June and November last year. None of the large armed groups installed in the town — and there are several — have made a move to leave it.

There are at least 5 distinct "armies" patrolling the streets of a town which is theoretically supposed to be demilitarised: the Armed Forces of the North (FAN) of Hissene Habre, the Defence Minister; the first people's army of Frolinat of Abba Seid, Minister of Home Affairs (and considered one of the greatest supports of Libyan policies); the People's Armed Forces (FAP) of the transitional government president Goukouni Oueddie — these last two have recently amalgamated; the Chad Armed Forces (FAT) of Col. Kamougue, vice president of the transitional government; French troops and Congolese troops.

People want Peace

The people of Chad want peace. The very fact that the majority of Chad people from the south have left N'Djamena to return to their villages and some have decided to squat at Kousseri on the Cameroon side of the River Chari, crossing into Chad twice a day, is enough evidence of this.

The dangers connected with the position of the country after 15 years of strife cannot be isolated from questions of general amnesty, unconditional release of prisoners, demilitarisation of the capital, setting up an integrated national army, questions of a proper constitution and, above all, the question of withdrawal of French troops from N'Djamena. There is the other side of this process of democratisation of Chad society, namely the question of trade union freedom and the encouragement of emergence of political parties — the numerous strikes in different sectors, especially in private commercial enterprises, indicate that ideas and not bayonets should be points people are rallied around and this would guarantee the much wanted "national reconciliation".

ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REVOLUTION

by A Reader

Last year a dispute broke out between a small faction in SACTU and the leadership which led to the sacking of the editor of *Workers' Unity* and his suspension, together with four of his supporters, from the ranks of the ANC in London. This article is not concerned with the actual activities and mode of operation of the five people concerned, which is being or has been dealt with by SACTU and the ANC. What is discussed in my article, however, is the analysis of the role of the trade union movement in the South African revolutionary struggle which is put forward in a pamphlet *The Workers' Movement and SACTU* circulated by the five dissidents. In my view the policies set out in this pamphlet are erroneous and run counter to the policies of the liberation movement which the five claim to be supporting but are in fact undermining.

The analysis in the pamphlet represents an attempt to apply to the South African struggle a particular economistic and "workerist" approach which has frequently appeared, in different forms, in the revolutionary movement at various times and in different countries. It is thus a tendency which is deep-rooted and has great resilience and this makes it important

that we should not rest content with disciplinary action, but that we should try to understand the incorrect theory which underlies the analysis.

The main document in the pamphlet, the memorandum submitted to the NEC of SACTU by the then editor of *Workers' Unity* Petersen, begins with a question:

> "When it comes to our tasks at home, a strange paralysis still grips SACTU. What is the root cause of it?" (p. 17)

The answer is given immediately:

> "I would like to submit for the consideration of the NEC that the root cause is *political*. We are affected by a *lack of clarity* about SACTU's role and future. There are *deep differences of opinion* within our ranks on the importance of trade union work; on the relationship between the workers' movement and the struggle of all the oppressed; on the relationship between national liberation, democracy and socialism; on SACTU's position in relation to armed struggle."(p. 17)

In short, the issue posed is the relationship between the trade union movement (or, at least, the revolutionary wing of that movement) and the revolutionary and national liberation struggle in the specific conditions in South Africa.

The document approaches the question, firstly, through a discussion of the specific relationship between the economic and political struggles in South Africa, secondly, through an analysis of the relationship between the armed struggle, on the one hand, and the trade union and political struggles on the other and, thirdly, through a particular, implied, conception of the relationship of SACTU to the workers' movement. The end result of the analysis, as we shall see, is the total collapse of the entire political and armed struggle of the popular masses into the trade union movement and the abandonment of any conception of an alliance in the revolutionary struggle between the working class and the 'rural poor' together, under the appropriate conditions, with the petty bourgeoisie.

The Relationship Between the Economic and Political Struggle in South Africa

According to the document, SACTU's role in the struggle is determined by the specific character of capitalist exploitation and oppression in South Africa.

The starting point of the analysis is the contention that in South Africa the link between the economic and political struggle is 'direct and obvious'. The point is familiar to us and has long been accepted by our movement even if the precise nature of the link has not been elaborated. The point is

that not only are the division of labour, wage rates, industrial organization etc structured on the basis of racial criteria but also the state tends to enter immediately into industrial conflicts involving black workers. As the document correctly states: "Every serious economic clash in South Africa confronts the black workers with the murderous state power of the enemy . . .' (p. 32)

It follows from this that the *fundamental* economic and political demands of the people cannot be achieved on the basis of the capitalist order in South Africa. In this respect, although there are differences in formulation and emphasis, the document does not stray too far from the position of our movement as expressed, for example, in the Freedom Charter and in the Programme of Action. Thus, to quote two typical passages from the document:

> "National liberation and democracy cannot be secured by the black workers of South Africa on the basis of capitalism, but only through the liquidation of capitalism and the building of socialism". (p. 19)

And again:

> "To establish genuine democratic *people's power* in South Africa, *which can only be secured on the foundation of workers' power*, means to smash the South African state — not merely as an *Apartheid state*, but equally as the *capitalist* state which it *essentially* is."(p. 21)

Thus national liberation can only be achieved on the basis of the destruction of the political and economic foundations of the apartheid system. But what organizations will lead this overall political struggle, by what forms of struggle and on the basis of which social classes? It is in the answer to these questions that both the incorrect analysis in the document and the strategy it is intended to support, are revealed.

Firstly, it is necessary to point to an *apparent* confusion in the document — apparent because, as will be seen, it is a confusion which serves an important purpose. It was shown above that the document argues that no fundamental changes can be achieved in South Africa without overthowing apartheid and capitalism. But there is an additional argument which the document derives directly from the above that is, the contention that "no substantial or lasting concessions" (p. 18), even though they fall far short of amounting to fundamental changes, in the spheres of wages, trade union rights, pass laws and migrant labour can be won from the apartheid regime. The document states:

> 'We have explained again and again that even the most basic demands of the workers can only be secured through the victory of the struggle *to smash apartheid and the profit system*.' (p. 19)

And furthermore, "The struggle for democracy has exactly the same implications". (p. 19)

Now it is true that the document does purport to recognize that there is a specifically trade union arena of struggle (see p. 23 — "it concentrates its activities in a definite field of struggle"-) and furthermore, that the trade union must "strive to mobilize and organise the workers *through day to day struggles for concessions and reforms. .'* (p. 26-27). However, the purpose of those struggles is to demonstrate to the workers that nothing can be won short of the revolution:

> ". . . the trade union represents for the workers weapons which they can use to advance their economic struggle and defend their gains. But as we have seen, not one of the vital material needs of the working class . . . can be secured on the basis of capitalism. Every *partial gain* by the workers in the economic struggle is immediately placed in jeopardy and sooner or later stolen back again by the employers and their apartheid state. The economic struggle is thus doomed to frustration unless it is linked to the revolutionary struggle for state power . . . . . ' (p. 26)

The idea that every gain won by the working class is merely absorbed by capital to its own advantage is an old one; it is an idea which totally underestimates the gains in many spheres made by the working class (political and trade union rights etc) in different countries.

But if this argument is, nonetheless, correct, then, until the revolution succeeds, all apparent gains will be frustrated sooner or later. What becomes vital then is that the working class should not as a result of its failure to win permanent concessions, itself become "frustrated", demoralised and passive. Since the revolutionary struggle is protracted, and gains, therefore, subject to frustration, how is the revolutionary struggle to be advanced? According to the document merely, it seems, by linking the immediate demands "to the revolutionary struggle for state power".

It is, of course, correct to link immediate with revolutionary demands in order to avoid a reformist position. But making such a linkage is quite obviously not enough. The guarantee against depression of the revolutionary struggle and the participation of the masses rests on the ability of the working class and revolutionary organizations to mobilize the masses, by their own struggles, to win concessions, to resist the erosion of gains and to win new gains and concessions. The mobilization of the masses and their success in winning concessions as the outcome of struggle is of fundamental importance in overcoming frustration and developing self consciousness in the struggle.

Quite the opposite position is argued in the document: in the view of the document the revolutionary struggle is furthered by ensuring that the so-called day to day demands which are put forward must be formulated so as to guarantee that the struggle *will fail to achieve them*. That is, frustration of the workers' struggle, failure to win their immediate demands is the proposed path to revolutionary confidence and intensification of the struggle. Thus:

> "We have to bring out in practice . . . the total incapacity of the system in South Africa (or any reforms within the system) to provide a decent life for the working people." (36) "For example, our wage demand . . . . . sets the minimum wage at an entirely *reasonable* level of R50 a week for all workers . . . This is impossible to achieve while capitalism has its stranglehold on the development of the South African economy". (p. 37)

It must be stressed that what is in issue here is *not* the necessity of a revolutionary trade union movement linking immediate demands with the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the regime. What is at issue is the insistence by the document that the revolutionary trade union movement must advance *general revolutionary demands* and only those specific demands which cannot be met except as the outcome of a successful revolutionary transformation of the society. That is, the trade union movement is conceived of as standing in the same relationship to state power as, for example, MK does — that is, in direct and total opposition unmediated by the possibility of intermediate demands around which the struggle can be conducted.

But, except in the moment of revolutionary crisis the trade union movement like the political movement (although in different ways) is obliged to conduct the struggle around specific demands.

Thus despite the reference to the trade union field, the document sees the struggle of the trade unions in a way which fails completely to differentiate it from and yet link it to the general political struggle. This is clearly reflected in a number of passages in the document in which the organizational role of SACTU is defined in a general way so as simply to identify it as a general revolutionary organization. Thus, for example,

> "SACTU is a trade union organization but it is compelled nonetheless to address itself to all the basic political questions of the South African revolution".

and the "impossibility" of separating the national liberation and socialist aims of the movement means that for SACTU

> "This understanding must be the cornerstone of SACTU's approach to the revolution."

This "overpoliticization" of the trade union sphere leads above all to the

obliteration of the specific role of the revolutionary trade union movement and gives to SACTU a *general*, revolutionary political function. This conclusion is reinforced by the document's conception of the armed struggle which, together with its analysis of the relationship of SACTU to the worker's movement leads, in fact, to the substitution of SACTU for other, political organizations.

The Trade Union Movement and the Armed Struggle

Thus far we have shown that the document, starting from the correct principle that in South Africa there is a particularly close relationship between the economic (trade union) struggle and the political struggle, then draws the quite erroneous conclusion that this requires a *fusion* of the revolutionary trade union movement and the "workers' movement" such that the entire political struggle of the workers becomes submerged in the trade union movement. Now the argument is taken further: from an argument that the armed struggle must not be separated from the political struggle, the conclusion necessarily seems to be that the organization of the armed struggle and that of the trade union movement must be fused into the latter. This emerges in the following way:

The document first of all makes the general point that

> "The struggle for the seizure of state power takes many forms and many courses linked together, but at the decisive point that struggle can only be won by defeating the armed force of the state with the revolutionary armed force of the masses." (p. 22)

In South Africa the futility of not linking the armed to other forms of struggle is demonstrated by the facts of Sharpeville and its aftermarth and, indeed, the ". . most advanced and politically conscious layers of the working class have never counterposed *armed struggle* to *mass struggle*, as if they were different things." (p 22)

The critical importance of the armed struggle notwithstanding, that struggle must be subordinated to the politics of the mass struggle:

> "A revolutionary strategy directed towards *armed insurrection — the only genuinely revolutionary strategy possible in South Africa* — requires *at every stage* that clear priority must be given to building organizations of *mass struggle*." (p. 22)

And this means

> ". . *that armed struggle must not be separated from mass struggle but must be fused with the development of the mass movement at every stage*. It means that politics — the politics of *mass struggle* —must at every point command the gun." (p. 23)

Now, within this general approach how are we to understand the *fusion*

of the armed struggle with SACTU according to the analysis advanced in the document?

Firstly, as in the case of all struggles of the "mass movement", the role of the armed struggle should be in the form of organized self-defence:

> ". . armed action on our side should in its early stages have *mainly* the character of *organized self-defence by the mass movement against the terror tactics of the state*. It means armed defence in favourable circumstances, of strikes, demonstrations, 'squatter' camps and schools; against police raids, pass arrests, forced removals and so forth." (p. 23)

The question arises, however, of how and under what organizational form this self defence is to be organized? In our movement it has been recognized that while the armed movement must be under the command of the political, nonetheless, it requires its own, separate form of organization. The document departs from this position in the most radical way. Not only is there absolutely no discussion in the document about the question of the separate organization of the armed wing of the movement and hence of the way in which that wing might be brought into relationship with the trade union struggle, but, perhaps, more importantly, the document absorbs the armed struggle into SACTU which is now set up as in command of the armed struggle. This can be shown through a series of quotations from the document:

> ". . The most advanced and politically conscious layers of the working class have never counterposed *armed struggle* to *mass struggle*, as if they were different things. For them and for us, *it is a question of the organization, mobilization and arming of the mass of the people, headed by the organized workers, towards* the eventual armed insurrection and seizure of state power." (p. 22)

This arming and organizing of the workers is, thus, a function of SACTU, and what is more is a task which belongs to the activists of SACTU who have been militarily trained; that is our militarily trained cadres find their organizational base not in armed units but in the ranks of SACTU. A revolutionary strategy aimed at armed insurrection

> "means the fullest participation of militarily trained revolutionaries in the day-to-day struggles of the people, *as political cadres first and foremost*, involved in the mobilizing, educating, training and arming of the mass movement."(p. 23)

SACTU and the Workers' Movement

The title of the pamphlet is *SACTU and the Workers' Movement* and this separation is repeated in many different parts of the document. The implication, of course, is that the workers' movement and SACTU are, in some sense, separate entities and that SACTU cannot be conceived of as incorporating the whole of the workers' struggle into itself.

It has already been shown, however, that the document actually argues for the "fusion" of the armed struggle and the workers' political struggle and organization fully into SACTU. This position is reinforced in a different way.

Firstly, no other organizational forms of the mass movement are discussed at all — the ANC rates one mention (an affirmation of the ANC-SACTU alliance), MK is not mentioned at all and nor is the Communist Party. And this, in a document purporting to analyse the role of the revolutionary trade union movement not merely in relation to specific demands for wages etc but in relation to the overall political and armed struggle to overthrow apartheid and capitalism in South Africa! The inescapable conclusion is that for the authors of the document SACTU *is* the workers' movement or, at the very least, the sole leading force of that movement:

> "It is an elementary duty of revolutionaries to make work in the trade union movement in South Africa one of the top priorities of the whole struggle. This work is indispensable if we are to find a road to the mass of the workers, to unite them in concrete struggles towards armed self-defence and the eventual forcible seizure of power." (p. 31)

That is, the whole of the workers' movement, its revolutionary role, its role as the factor of political organization and unity of the whole working class is condensed into the sole bearer of the working class struggle — SACTU.

In a certain sense, the exaggeration of the role of SACTU can be related to the fact that the authors of the pamphlet held positions within SACTU which thus appeared to provide an organizational base from which their line could be propagated. It is necessary, however, to go beyond that and to explain why SACTU could be conceived of by them to fulfil the role they wished to assign to it. The answer lies in their economistic conception of the political struggle and a related underestimation of the importance of class alliances in the struggle.

Implicit in, and underlying the entire document, is the "workerist" conception that the political struggle grows *directly* out of the immediate struggles at the point of production. For them, the wage struggle leads directly to the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of apartheid and capitalism. It is not possible here to discuss this issue at any length. It is clear, however, that despite the direct intrusion of the political into the economic, there are structural conditions which tend to limit the horizons of the trade union struggle and it is quite impossible to reduce the

complexities of the general revolutionary political struggle to the trade union struggle.

For one thing, the revolutionary struggle is never fought by the working class alone even though that class is the foundation of the struggle. It is significant, however, that because the document accords to the workplace the sole source of revolutionary struggle, it is unable to conceive of the role of other classes. Indeed, it barely mentions other classes and makes no reference at all to the "rural poor". For the document, other classes are simply passive entities to be drawn behind the active, working class.

Thus, from the starting point that the working class is the leading force, the document moves more or less to the position that the working class is the *only* force in the revolutionary struggle. From that position it is a short step to the view that the political organization of the working class must occur within the factory and from that notion to the idea that the trade union movement (rather its revolutionary wing) is the political organiser and leading organization of the entire revolutionary movement on all its fronts.

It is clear, however, that the political leadership of the revolutionary movement must be in a position to organise the unity of all oppressed classes on the basis of a broad revolutionary programme. Such a task cannot be fulfilled by an organization of trade unions, though it can of course play a part in it.

PORTRAIT OF A BANTUSTAN

by Ruth Nhere

"You in Venda are setting an example to many states in this continent, where the democratic process has been swept away by dictatorship which makes a mockery of democracy."(1) With these words the South African Commissioner General for Venda hailed the impending "independence" of another apartheid Bantustan. Flanked by Mozambique to the east and Zimbabwe to the north, Venda was pronounced an "independent state" on September 13, 1979.

As the enemy accelerates the violent balkanisation of our country, the need to "reject totally any form of ideology which sees the Bantustans as enclaves of independence from which further advance can be made"(2) becomes even more urgent. Indeed the mass mobilisation of our people who are today facing the realities as they are turned into "citizens" of these dumping grounds is high on the agenda of urgent tasks facing the liberation alliance as a whole. It is with this in mind that we attempt to look at what those realities are for our people in the Venda Bantustan, at the process leading to "independence" and at what lessons can be drawn

for the advance of the level of mobilisation and resistance of our people against the Bantustanization of our country as a whole.

Total Dependence

Venda is the smallest of the three Bantustans that have so far been labelled "independent". Consisting of only 650,000 ha of land, the de facto population of Venda was estimated at 314,600 with another 146,000 living outside of its territory in 1978.(3) Figures revealed that only 3 per cent of those between the ages of 20-24 living in the Bantustan are male.(4) This reflection of the level of migrant labour is borne out by recent estimates which put the total of migrants from Venda at 62,000 and that of commuters to 'white areas' at 5,200.(5)

The role of migrant labour in this and other Bantustan economies is a glaring indicator of the absolute impoverishment of our people forced to live in these areas. In 1976, for example, 71.6% of Venda's gross national income was earned by migrant workers,(6) Venda's complete dependence on South Africa was underlined by its budget for last year — where out of R36.7 million, some R30 million came as a direct subsidy from Pretoria.(7)

The large majority of Venda's population depend on subsistence agriculture for survival. Land is heavily over-stocked — according to surveys the total stock which the natural grazing of Venda could carry without irreparably harming the land was 50,000 large stock units as opposed to the present 114,582.(8) A bitter reflection of this land hunger is the infant mortality rate for Venda recently put at 103 per 1000 for females and 134 per 1000 for males. The same study estimated the per capita income for the population at R22 a month.(9)

The rate of under and unemployment, as in the rest of our country, is running to massive proportions. Even a report by the Rand Afrikaans University, prepared in order to give credibility to Venda's "independence", concluded that between 145,000 and 150,000 employment opportunities would have to be created if Venda aimed to employ all its citizens!(10)

As in the other 'homelands', Venda has its "National Development Corporation". According to the regime's propaganda "these are the instruments which the governments of the homelands use to stimulate economic development . . . by granting commercial and housing loans, erecting business premises and financing farmers, agricultural cooperatives and black industrialists".(11) This stimulation of 'development' in Venda has been paltry even by Bantustan standards. In the agricultural sector, one of Venda's most successful projects is the

Sapekoe Tea Estate which provides jobs for a total of 650 women and 150 men.[12] In the area of "commerce", what is termed the "manufacturing industry" — food production, leather goods — boasts 58 concerns employing 660 people. The "Wholesale and Retail Trade" has 430 establishments (these 'establishments' include market stalls).[13]

The growth of the industrial sector is of course underlined as a priority in the regime's propaganda — their study on Venda is pervaded by an air of optimism for the future: "The Vendas' participation in industrial development in Venda is still limited, although there are indications of the rise of an entrepreneurial class". Evidence of this trend is given as ". . eleven tailors, 5 bakeries, 10 brickworks and 21 gristling mills".[14] The industrial sector, if it can be so described, consisted of a total of 58 establishments — including tyre services, steel works and tea production — employing 721 people in 1977/78.[15] Although apartheid planners have hailed Venda's coal resources as being a potentially valuable asset, the total lack of any infrastructure in the Bantustan puts this vision in the realms of fantasy at present.

Where then is the "development" being concentrated? We need to be very wary of the official figures provided by the regime on these questions. They put Venda's economic growth rate at 13.8 per cent but nearly all of this is derived from two sources. First the area of subsistence agriculture where a rise in production reflects a huge increase in population as a result of the regime's forced removals policy. We should remember that between 1960 and 1970, the overall percentage of the African population living in the Bantustans has jumped from 37.5 per cent to 45.5 per cent as a result of the acceleration of this brutal policy.[16] The second area contributing to this growth rate is that of "public expenditure" — that is remuneration for government officials, police and finance for overall strengthening of the repressive machinery in the Bantustan.

Problems facing our people in Venda are enormous. We have already seen that unemployment is a major issue — official figures estimated that total unemployment would be in the region of 84,000 by 1980.[17] Scarcity of land and over-population mean that the people are bordering on starvation. For those who manage to find a job in Venda wages are deplorably low. At the beginning of this year, workers at the Phaswa ria Boerdery coffee plantation were earning between R16 and R23 a *month*. Here women are required to dig 72 pits per day for 70 cents while men have to dig 108 three-foot deep holes in a day for R1 — failing which they get nothing.[13] Who then is benefitting from Venda's "independence"?

Collaboration Pays

The answer to this question is relatively simple. Cabinet ministers in Venda earn R19,500 a year and their status brings elegant trappings — the Presidential Palace alone cost R264,882 to construct.[19] The political process in this Bantustan provides ample ammunition for those who want to demonstrate the total fraud of the whole Bantustan programme. Chief Mphephu and his Venda National Party (VNP) have excelled themselves in collaboration and can only be described as stooges in the Matanzima mould.

Despite Mphephu's declaration that political parties were "an alien innovation which would divide Venda people into warring factions"[20] the opposition Venda Independence Party (VIP) was formed in 1973. Established by Mphephu's former 'urban representative' in Soweto, sociologist Baldwin Mudau, the VIP declared that "we have come to a stage where the old order must change, giving way to a government of the people by the people for the people." (*Rand Daily Mail*, March 15, 1974.) Mphephu has had a long battle to defend his position in the Legislative Assembly — as early as 1974 so many MPs had crossed the floor that the VIP needed only five more seats to topple the 'government' party. At that time the Assembly consisted of 60 members — 27 chiefs who were automatic members, 15 headmen nominated by a college of chiefs and 18 elected by popular vote.

Mphephu's problems were just beginning — not only did he face an increasingly strong VIP but Venda was to experience the same explosion of resistance as the rest of SA during and after June 1976. At the height of the uprisings in Venda, more than 16,000 students gathered with placards at the local stadium and marched through Sibasa.[22] Venda was hit by school boycotts, attacks on all symbols of the Bantustan administration and even on Mphephu himself. By the July 1978 elections opposition to Mphephu was taking two forms. On the one hand the low turn-out for the elections themselves reflected the disgust most voters felt with recent events and indeed the whole farce of politics in Venda. On the other hand, those that did vote registered their opposition by giving the VIP a sweeping victory — 31 of the 42 contested seats in the Assembly. To ensure that the VIP retained power, every possible weapon was brought out of Mphephu's and Pretoria's arsenal, ranging from the nomination of defeated VNP candidates for seats in the Legislative Assembly to the wide use of Proclamation R276 issued on October 19, 1978, providing for detention without trial for 3 months. This was to be the fate of more than 50 VIP

MPs and their supporters.

Through this intimidation and threats that MPs who boycotted the Legislative Assembly would be sacked, Pretoria was able to ensure that at the round-table talks on Venda's independence constitution both VNP and VIP were present. The *Post* newspaper quoted one of Venda's 'citizens' as reflecting the feelings of many when he said that the VIP capitulation "has proved beyond any doubt how useless homeland politics are to the plight of blacks in this country."(23)

Flexible Tactics

The VIP did not stand on a firm platform of opposition to Pretoria, but did win some measure of popular support through its opposition to the stooge party, its exposure of election rigging and other corruption by the VNP. Although the VIP leadership spoke of "government for the people", the VIP's ideological orientation was expressed by Mudau after his second visit to the United States in 1974 when he said: "We share the belief that the democratic model and the freedom of the market place are in themselves forces for liberation". (*World* June 10, 1977.) The level of support that the VIP did win, however, reflects the scope for mobilisation of the people in this area and shows that they are searching for means of voicing their aspirations.

The issues on which our people could be mobilised here as in other Bantustans provide fertile ground for those working to raise the level of resistance to 'independence'. On land, unemployment, wages, working conditions, loss of South African citizenship and the increased suffering that goes with it — all these are burning issues. Work by militants requires both flexible tactics and the development of the broadest possible front to fight the regime and its collaborators. While fighting with all our power against "any form of ideology which sees the Bantustans as enclaves of independence", we must also work in the concrete conditions which exist in these areas and in attempting to do this we should, as Lenin said, recognise that

> "if you want to help the 'masses' and win the sympathy and support of the 'masses', you should not fear the difficulties . . . but must absolutely work wherever the masses are to be found . . . . in those institutions, societies and associations — even the most reactionary — in which proletarian or semi-proletarian masses are to be found".(24)

The possibilities exist for using platforms provided by the Bantustan framework to expose the nature of apartheid's designs, but it is essential

that "the battle against the Bantustans must engage the mass of the people where they live. It must not be left to the limited, and often sham, confrontations between the traditional leaders and the regime.[25] The boycott of apartheid institutions is of course a *tactic* and not a principle in our political arsenal — *flexibility* is basic to our strategy. "Unless we learn to apply all the methods of struggle, we may suffer grave and sometimes even decisive defeat, if changes beyond our control in the position of other classes bring to the forefront a form of activity in which we are especially weak. If, however, we learn to use all the methods of struggle, victory will be certain."[26]

It is the duty therefore of all revolutionaries to soberly assess the concrete objective conditions in which they live and work, and to use those tactical weapons which best serve the aspirations of the working masses. A cursory look at the situation in Venda shows the potential and need for greater organisation and mobilisation of our people. But in our choice of tactics we must ensure a correct assessment of the mood of the masses, for as Lenin said, slogans of revolutionary parties should "always be in advance of the revolutionary initiative of the masses, serve as a beacon, . . . and show them the shortest and most direct route to complete, absolute and decisive victory".[27]

Notes:

1. *Voice* 25/2/79.
2. "South Africa — A Time of Challenge" *African Communist* No 56, 1974.
3. *Daily News* 27/8/79.
4. *Financial Times* (UK) 12/9/79.
5. *Race Relations Survey* 1979 p. 372.
6. *Race Relations Survey* 1979 p. 370.
7. *Financial Times* (UK) 12/9/79.
8. *Race Relations Survey* 1979 p. 353.
9. *Financial Mail* 7/9/79.
10. *Race Relations Survey* 1979 p. 371.
11. BIC Annual Report 1977 p. 3.
12. *Race Relations Survey* 1979 p. 353.
13. *Race Relations Survey* p. 359.
14. *Benbo Economic Review* Venda 1976 p. 42.
15. *Race Relations Survey* 1979 p. 365.
16. R. T. Bell in *Africa Perspective*, University of the Witwatersrand, no 6 Aug. 77.
17. Planning Proposals for Venda, R.A.U, 1979 p. 190.

18. *Voice* 16/1/80.
19. *Voice* 16/1/80.
20. *Rand Daily Mail*, 30/1/74.
21. *Rand Daily Mail*, 15/3/74.
22. *Rand Daily Mail*, 5/10/77.
23. *Post* 3/4/79.
24. V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol 3, p. 317.
25. "Forward to People's Power – the Challenge Ahead", SACP Central Committee statement, *African Communist* No 80, 1980.
26. V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol 3 p.352.
27. V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol 1 p. 504.

§§§

BOOK REVIEWS

THE AFRICAN UNDERGROUND

Africa Undermined, by Greg Lanning and Marti Mueller. Published by Pelican Books. Price £3.50.

It is easy enough to think up jokey titles — like the one above — to cover a serious look at the character and consequences of mining development in Africa. Pelican Books, publishers of just such a serious study by authors G. Lanning and M. Mueller, chose *Africa Undermined,* less concerned with its jokey qualities perhaps, than with its double meaning. Because it is at the centre of the authors' thesis that mining, which contributes so much to the total cash value of Africa's production, serves to erode the foundations of real, long-term development and to undermine the future. Their concern is with African underdevelopment; yet in the first of the apparent paradoxes of this study, they seek real understanding of the causes of underdevelopment not within the backward sectors of the economy but within its most developed sector — mining. Another apparent paradox —

that Africa, the continent with the highest concentration of valuable mineral deposits, is yet the poorest and least economically developed — has often been stated. And yet the reasons for that paradox remain as yet misunderstood — or disregarded — by many who struggle constantly to overcome that heritage of poverty and underdevelopment.

Economic and social theorists — including many Western "experts" who advise African governments and direct the international financial agencies — have insisted, against much evidence to the contrary, that the pattern of development which produced the economically advanced countries of Western Europe and America is a recipe for all seasons and all places. Yet the recipe — applied in Africa a century or more after Europe — repeatedly confounds their predictions. In the heyday of Western capitalist development, mining provided the base from which sprung an expanding demand for manufactured goods, thus new industries and towns; new towns made increasing demands for agricultural produce which in turn powered the growth of large-scale cash-crop farming and 'agri-business'. It is an attractive, seemingly logical and — apparently — historically proven recipe.

And yet contemporary African experience fails to repeat the logic. Already mining development in Africa is more developed than was that of Europe at a similar stage of *its* growth; and yet industry follows sluggishly if at all, and agriculture withers. The gap between the developed and the underdeveloped — that is between those who followed this course a century or more ago and those who follow it today — does not close. The late starters in this growth process do not make up the leeway, but fall further behind. This African experience disproves the theory — except, as the theorists are at pains constantly to remind us, except in the case of South Africa.

Here alone in Africa the classic Western capitalist "success story" has been repeated; the economy has 'taken off'; high rates of annual economic growth are recorded; industry and agriculture advance on the base of the mining development. What then is it, in Zambia, Zaire and elsewhere in independent Africa, that prevents this experience being repeated? Is the fault in themselves? Or in the theory? It is this that *Africa Undermined* sets out to examine.

South Africa and Anglo American

Inevitably a large part of the study deals with the most developed mining area — South Africa; and with that colossus within it, the Anglo American

Corporation (AAC). From its base in South Africa, Anglo American dominates the mining industries of large sectors of Africa, including Zambia, Zaire and Angola; it has moved out of its Johannesburg founding board-rooms into the centre of that small coterie of 'multinationals' whose economic-financial manipulations now sway the economies of "Western" capitalism from Tokyo to Frankfurt.

In examining the growth of AAC and similar companies, the book provides factual knowledge which will enable those who struggle to free Africa from its impoverishment and dependence to separate the actual influence of AAC and its counterparts from the mythical public relations claims about their "liberalising" and "progressive" influence on backward Africa.

The authors show how the entry of western capitalism into African mining in the 19th century, above all the "scramble for Africa", was an alien invasion. It burst upon African society, undermining its roots, breaking developed social and political institutions, shattering its base. Perhaps this was not the intention — the British governor of Griqualand West at the time of the great diamond rush intended that:

> '. . the immense wealth yet to be obtained from our diamond mines should be carefully guarded, in order that the people of South Africa may derive the profits accruing from them rather than that such profits should go out of the country to foreign companies.'

But intentions were swept aside by economic realities. Capital – once within the country — must, by its nature, be employed; wage labour for its employment must be found, if not from within the existing social order then by breaking the existing social order and establishing a new money-based economy; subsistence farming must be displaced, to make available wage-labourers for hire. The alien intrusion of mining under these conditions could only repeat in pale parody its impact on the growth of the homelands of western capitalism. There,

> ". . . the exodus from the rural areas which accompanied the process of industrialisation was preceded by a dramatic increase in agricultural productivity. By contrast, industrialisation in the underdeveloped countries of Africa was the *cause* of a massive decline in rural productivity."

Within fifty years of the development of capitalist mining at Kimberley the mining companies had established their desired social order; viable economies and societies had been undermined to the point of destruction; and that pattern was followed wherever the alien intrusion pushed itself into Africa. Viable social systems were destroyed or transformed; manpower and mineral resources were wrenched from their social base

and incorporated into the metropolitan-dominated world capitalist system.

> "The result was decapitalisation, structurally generated unproductiveness, and increasing misery for the indigenous inhabitants."

The process did not stop with the end of the nineteenth century "scramble for Africa." It has been gathering pace ever since, with the fastest growth of mining being recorded in the era of advance to African independence, the era since the second World War. The contribution of mining to the African economy as a whole doubled between 1960 and 1968 and in mineral producing countries it accounted for a tremendous part of total domestic production — 50% of GDP in Namibia; 35% in Zambia; 90% in Mauretania; 75% in Sierra Leone; 69% in Liberia and 67% in Zaire. The growth of mining continues at a faster rate than other parts of the economy.

More Dependence

Such growth, taking place not in the era of the industrial revolution in Europe but in an era of high technological development is not paralleled by increasing labour opportunities; instead it calls forth more mechanisation, more computerisation, more capitalisation; so that Africa is caught in a pincer. It is constantly less able to provide from its own resources the ever larger sums of capital needed for such high technology growth, and is thus increasingly forced into dependence upon the multinational financial giants. But even then, these high technology developments produce only low levels of employment opportunity for the local population, thus compelling further dependence on new multinational-type ventures. The financial colossi gradually strangle their hosts, and the popular hopes generated by independence turn to ashes.

Africa Undermined is less concerned with producing the generalised thesis than with studying the individual case histories of such developments in various parts of Africa, so that the lessons for the future can be discerned. Of all the case histories of African mining, it is the South African gold and diamond Randlord histories which have been best researched previously, and with which most of us are familiar. But South Africa is *not* the typical African case. South Africa *has* to some extent managed the shift from the mining base into the development of heavy industry and manufacturing which has not been managed anywhere else in the continent. Partly that success is to be accounted for by the time when mining developed, partly by the particular and special nature of gold as a

commodity. But above all — as the authors show without any possibility of doubt — it is because here, unlike the rest of Africa, the growth rested — and rests — firmly on a foundation of vicious racism and "the massive exploitation of a non-unionised, unskilled, disfranchised black labour force."

The vast shadow of the greatest of all African mining colossi, Anglo American, looming so ominously over all of independent Africa, serves only to highlight once again how crucial for the whole of Africa is the liberation of South Africa. For here in the heart of AAC, the liberation movement is pledged not to develop with the multinationals, but to take back the mines from the financial corporations and turn them into the property of the nation. To understand how crucial is the matter of relations with the multinationals — above all the mining multinationals — for the future of Africa, the testimony in this book needs to be studied and studied again.

That is not to say that the book says it all. There are many matters of interpretation, of economic and political theory, on which many readers will disagree with the authors. One could, for example, debate — usefully — whether the authors' emphasis on *mining* as the generator does not lead them to underemphasise the real character of the contemporary colossi as interlocked financial giants dabbling in mining, industry and agribusiness, which is the characteristic form of the monster today. Though the origins were in mining, today mining is only a part of a structure held together by the dominance of finance. Perhaps more important is the fact that while the authors see correctly that the battle of technical and managerial skills, expertise and foreign connections between the independent governments and the colossi is an unequal battle, they underestimate — almost disregard — the fact that Africa's future does not lie between the ruling elite and the corporations alone. There is a third factor; and whether or not it has yet anywhere managed to make itself the decisive factor, it surely must do so if the battle for Africa is to be won. That is the factor of the people — of the working men and women in industry and agribusiness, often with their own political aims and political parties, their own class solidarities and class organisations. Though they have yet to be heard from in most of Africa, they are commencing to flex their muscles in several countries — notably in Angola and Mozambique — significantly where the mining influence is comparatively weak but where independence has nevertheless still had to be defended tenaciously in a world which overwhelmingly favours the multinationals.

But these criticisms of the book are matters of theory for the ideologists. While they wrestle with the answers to them, the book will give the fighters for African independence an understanding of the empires of real power and wealth whose stranglehold on their countries and their futures must be broken if the reality of development is to be won.

T.

A GUIDE TO CONFUSION

One Azania One Nation: The National Question in South Africa
by No Sizwe. ZED Press, London 1979.

The correct solution in theory and practice of the interaction and interconnection of the national and class struggle in South Africa is of paramount significance. There are no ready-made solutions or answers to this highly complex phenomenon. Thus we in the revolutionary movement welcome endeavours to elucidate and analyse this problem further so that we may arrive at a clearer understanding. No Sizwe's book unfortunately not only fails to enlighten but at times buries the issues in new depths of obfuscation.

It is central to No Sizwe's thesis that categories such as "race", "ethnic groups", "national groups" and "nations" are not only inadequate as tools for analysis, but are totally wrong. Time after time he alleges that those who use such categories are merely echoing the racist stereotypes of the racist regime and ruling class. Thus the ANC, SACP and renowned Soviet scholars such as Potekhin are in the final analysis helping to shore up the system of racism and capitalist exploitation.

In place of those categories the author substitutes the term "colour-caste". One searches in vain for a scientific explanation of this term. At the very least one expected an examination of the caste system in India. But instead we are offered meaningless words like "the fact is that racial ideology has played the same role in countries such as South Africa as the Hindu religion has done in India" (p 148). This betrays an ignorance not only of the Hindu religion and the caste system in India, but also of the role and function of the ideology of racism in any capitalist society.

No Sizwe at one point quotes Oliver Cox, the well-known US writer on racism, but then rejects him. What Cox said accurately sums up the fatal flaws in No-Sizwe's so-called theory. He said:

> "It is true that sometimes members of the modern caste school have referred to race relations as 'colour-caste', but so far as we know, they have never shown in what way colour-caste is different from caste. In fact, some of the earlier theories on the origin of caste have sought to identify caste with racial antagonism. Therefore the substitution of the term 'colour-caste' for caste does not seem to have relieved the fundamental confusion." (p 147).

To give weight to his notion of "colour-caste" No Sizwe repeatedly says there is only one nation in South Africa. However, towards the end of the book he says, "The nation . . . . consists of all the people who are prepared to throw off the yoke of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression." Then after correctly saying "The nation of South Africa is struggling to be born", he adds "The working class, in short, has become the leading class in the nation and is about to constitute itself as the nation of South Africa." (p 180). He would have us believe the analysis is so simple. Those who are as yet not ready to overthrow capitalist exploitation cannot be a part of the "nation" and other classes and fractions of classes in the rural and urban areas are also excluded from this "nation".

Proceeding from his "thesis" that there were and are no distinct races or national groups in South Africa, No Sizwe severely criticises the Communist Party and the Congress movement for pursuing the wrong strategy. In particular the SACP's thesis of "colonialism of a special type" is attacked. He distorts the history of the SACP and its predecessor the CPSA, and refuses to acknowledge the pioneering role played by the CPSA in disseminating the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, in creating trade unions and in clarifying the nature in theory and practice of the organic connection between the national and class struggle in the South African revolution.

He attacks the Congress movement of the fifties for having "caste-based organisations" which did not contribute to the unity of all the revolutionary forces. Any revolutionary strategy has to comprehend and reflect reality. Whilst practice is blind without theory, it is always practice which is the criterion of truth. "Facts", as Lenin said, "are stubborn things". Thus if one looks at the history of our revolutionary struggle objectively, one reaches the inescapable conclusion that in the last four decades it was the Congress movement and the Communist Party which were the decisive political instruments of the oppressed and exploited masses; that it was these organisations which made and still make the decisive contribution to the heightening of the political consciousness of the masses, to practical revolutionary opposition to white minority rule and capitalist exploitation and to the unity in action of all revolutionary

forces. It is not in the universities that unity is brought about, but in the heat of the battle.

It is above all revolutionary experience that teaches us the correct lessons. At the present time the ANC has in the course of the revolutionary process emerged as *the* national liberation movement, articulating the grievances and aspirations of the oppressed blacks and democratic whites. It was precisely the revolutionary experience of the fifties and sixties which made such unity possible. No Sizwe ignores this rich treasure-house of revolutionary experience. The author would have found his labours more profitable if he had asked himself why the Non-European Unity Movement, whose political line he seems to favour, remained at best on the periphery of the struggle and at worst disruptive and objectively counter-revolutionary.

No Sizwe correctly mentions the need for an armed revolutionary sruggle to overthrow the yoke of racism, fascism and colonialism. Yet he manages to ignore Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC. Let us remind him that it is only the units of Umkhonto we Sizwe that have engaged the enemy in armed confrontation, that it is to the ANC and Umkhonto that so many thousands of young black militants are turning for training in the art of political and military warfare. Even a cursory examination of the statements of the enemy shows that the forces they fear most are those of the ANC, SACP, Umkhonto we Sizwe and SACTU. Indeed, today more and more of our people are openly expressing their support for the Freedom Charter and for leaders like Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu and Yusuf Dadoo. So whilst No Sizwe produces theories which have about them the smell of the university campus, the oppressed masses, and in particular the black working class, regard the ANC and its allies as the only revolutionary force capable of defeating the enemy both in the political and military sphere.

No Sizwe is very fond of speaking about the leading role of the working class. Yet for him SACTU does not even exist. Who can deny that it is because of the consistent and principled work of the SACP, ANC and SACTU that the black working class is today able to fulfil its rightful role as the leading social force in the struggle for national liberation? For the author the struggle at the present moment should be, not for national liberation, but for socialism. Thus the SACP is no better than the "liberal bourgeoisie" when it speaks of the two stages of the revolutionary process in South Africa. It is a recipe for disaster to artificially merge the two phases of the struggle. It is true that the objective conditions in South Africa make

it possible, after national liberation, to achieve a speedy transition to socialism, but this also depends on the subjective factors and the balance of class forces nationally and internationally.

The author says that he has written this book within the framework of a Marxist methodology. Yet he has somehow managed to ignore completely the riches of Lenin's works on the question. Furthermore, except for some abusive language he completely ignores the solution to the national question in the Soviet Union. Above all, he distorts the facts and making of the history of the South African liberation movement. The science of Marxism-Leninism is a guide to action, but this book is a guide to confusion.

Azad

CLASS AND THE PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT

The World Market Today by Dmitry Kostyukhin (Progress Publishers, Moscow).

It is easy to find Marxist textbooks dealing with the economic phenomena of the past and, of course, there is no shortage of articles in economic journals about particular aspects of the present situation. A book setting out briefly, in language accessible to the non-specialist, the new features of the post-war world economic situation fills a definite need. This is what Dmitry Kostyukhin has produced. The task which he set himself was an extremely difficult one, as the economic history of the last thirty years has been marked by the interplay of a whole series of new factors.

The rise of a socialist world economy, fundamentally separate from, yet continually interacting with the capitalist economy, is the greatest of the new factors. Technological progress, leading to continual increases in industrial productivity and frequent changes in the raw material needs of industry, is another development of profound importance. The international division of labour has increased (though on different bases) in both the capitalist and the socialist worlds.

So far as capitalism is concerned, this increased division of labour is intimately connected with increased monopolisation and the phenomenal

growth of the multinational corporation. The traditional flow of imperialist trade (raw materials to the metropolis and manufactured goods back to the colonies) has been profoundly modified, firstly by the tendency of multinational manufacturing corporations to shift manufacturing capacity from their original home bases to overseas subsidiaries, secondly by the increasing tendency of industrialised countries to trade with one another and thirdly by the efforts of former colonies to break out of the old pattern. These latter efforts have in many cases been thwarted by the collapse of traditional commodity markets and dramatic shifts in the terms of trade against the producers of raw materials. Then there is the one great exception — the oil market, in which the terms of trade have moved in favour of oil producers.

Kostyukhin deals with all these points most lucidly and provides useful statistical illustrations to his arguments. For the Marxist wishing to update his general economic knowledge, the book can be heartily recommended. It does not, however, attempt to solve any of the most difficult and politically sensitive problems. China is not mentioned. While "the energy crisis" is described, there is no analysis of its causes, of the class nature of the OPEC governments or of the use they have made of their wealth. "The developing countries" are discussed as a single bloc, with no mention of the different class forces at work within their ranks. This last point in particular makes the book somewhat inadequate as a guide to action for Marxist parties in Africa.

P.M.

THE WAY OUT OF POVERTY

"Land, Labour Migration, and Politics in Southern Africa: Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland", by Donald Kalinde Kowet. (Scandinavian Institute of African Studies Uppsala 1978). 243pp.

Characteristic to Samir Amin's style, Kowet identifies three types of colonial penetration into Africa, hence categorises African countries into:

a) Africa of the Colonial Economy — mainly French and West Africa;

b) Africa of Concession — owning companies — mainly the mineral rich central Africa;
c) Africa of Labour Reserves — mainly Southern Africa.

The book is about the third category of states or part of it i.e. Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

The main aim of the study is to show how colonial and local forces interacted to restrict access to land by the majority of the citizens. Kowet is one of few authors on Southern Africa who follow a Neo-Marxist approach to the problem. He sees reduction of these lands into labour reserves as the main source of underdevelopment.

The histories of the three states is traced from around 1800 through the making of the present Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland to the modern post-independence period. A lot happened during this era and the author's desire to cover the entire period has its own disadvantages, as he can only do so in a brief cursory fashion.

All the same it is easy reading and hence a valuable introduction to the study of the region. Intra-African conflicts stemming from the Zulu wars, MaNthatisi's escapades from Lesotho to Botswana and back to Lesotho, the Ndebeles etc., are all given clear though brief accounts. Intra-European conflicts, mainly between the Boers and missionaries, enlighten the reader on the background leading to Boer usurpation of land belonging to the three states, and the annexation of the remainder of the states by the British who were the favourites of the missionaries. These conflicts and the relevant strengths of the chiefs of these countries determined whether or not Europeans could acquire land within the territories.

This acquisition of land became common in Botswana and Swaziland, an important factor relating to the later migration of labour from these states.

Kowet distinguishes three periods leading to migration of locals to South Africa:

a) Period of European land appropriation in the three territories, the whole southern African region still being the periphery and Britain the centre:
b) Period from the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910 up to the independence of the three territories, a period when South Africa became the centre of the region;
c) Period after independence when the whole capitalist world, through multinationals, create centre-periphery relationships within the

territories themselves.

Within this framework, the author looks at economic integration in the region through the Southern African Customs Union and the financial arrangements. He also looks at the economic activities in the three states, the development of political parties and the role of South Africa in influencing the trend of events to favour the triumph of conservative parties. A neo-colonial scenario is created with chiefs collaborating with white landowners to block radical legislation for land redistribution. All this perpetuates inequalities, leading to the majority of people seeking work in the centre which is a drain on labour resources and further underdevelopment of the three states.

There are plenty of references, useful on their own to the reader who wants to go deeper. Kowet could have done a better job, however, if he had concentrated on a shorter time period and towards the end suggested a way out of the quagmire of poverty in the states. Growth due to excessive mining in Botswana is mistaken for development by the central planners. Are there any chances of a radical solution to these problems? Such questions remain unanswered.

S.V. Chinyoka

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

FACTS AND INTERPRETATION

From Nadine Gordimer, Johannesburg

Thank you very much for the issue of *The African Communist* containing a review of my novel, *Burger's Daughter*.

I uphold without question the right of any critic to assess a work according to his/her tenets, political and literary; I should merely like to correct, as my duty to your readers, a matter of fact that can be validated *only* by myself, as the author of that novel.

Your critic states that the politics of the book "derived almost entirely from Roux's *Time Longer Than Rope* and the gossip that floats about in left-wing circles, is a travesty".

In fact my sources were principally the impeccable ones of Simons' *Class and Colour in South Africa 1850-1950* and Slovo's *South Africa — No Middle Road (Southern Africa, The New Politics of Revolution)* plus the Black Community Programmes publications edited by Mafika Pascal Gwala, B.A. Khoapa, and Thoko Mbanjwa, and numerous unpublished texts.

LISTEN TO RADIO FREEDOM, VOICE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND THE PEOPLE'S ARMY, UMKHONTO WE SIZWE.

RADIO MADAGASCAR:	*shortwave 49 m band, 6135 KHz, 8-9pm daily.*
RADIO LUSAKA:.	*shortwave 41 m band, 7.3 MgHz, 8-30-9am daily.*
RADIO LUANDA:	*shortwave, 40 & 30 m bands; medium wave 27.6 m band, 7.30 pm daily.*
RADIO TANZANIA:	*shortwave, 19 m band, 15,435 KHz, 8.15pm Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Friday; 31 m band, 6.15am Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday.*

Be informed by keeping in tune with –

RADIO MOSCOW'S AFRICAN SERVICE.

Keeps you up to date on:

Life and developments in the USSR, the Soviet people's solidarity with the courageous struggle of the peoples of Southern Africa against apartheid and racial discrimination, for national and social liberation.

Africa can hear Radio Moscow 23 hours a day in 14 languages.

For Southern Africa		Time GMT	WAVELENGTH
Listen to us	in English:	18.30-19.00	19,25,31,49 m.
		15.00-15.30	13,16,19,25,31m.
	in Zulu:	17.30-18.00	16,19,25m.
	in Shona and Ndebele:	15.30-16.30	13,16,19,25m.

Important: Please note that our frequencies are changed in May and October. The details are announced at the end of our programmes.

Address: African Service, Radio Moscow, Moscow, USSR

Available from
INKULULEKO PUBLICATIONS
39 GOODGE STREET
LONDON W1P 1FD

COMMUNIST CALL TO AFRICA

Document from meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties of Tropical and Southern Africa held in 1978
Price 25p (50 cents)

MOSES KOTANE

South African Revolutionary. A political biography.
Price £3.00 ($8.00)

THE ROAD TO SOUTH AFRICAN FREEDOM

Programme of the South African Communist Party
Price 25p (50 cents)

Be informed by keeping in tune with-

Radio Berlin International

The Voice of the German Democratic Republic

RBI

Keeps you up to date on:

Life and developments in the Socialist German state and the socialist community.
Mankind's struggle for – Peace, National Liberation, Social Liberation.
Get to know the standpoint of the socialist German state by listening to Radio Berlin International.

You can receive us in:–

Africa
in English, French, Swahili on the following metre bands: 49, 25, 19, 16 and 13.

Middle East
in Arabic on the following metre bands: 49, 30, 25, 19, 16 and 13.

South East Asia
in English and Hindi on the following metre bands: 25, 19, 16 and 13.

IMPORTANT: Please note that our frequencies are changed in March, May, September and November. The details are announced at the end of our programmes.

GDR, 116 Berlin

Phototypesetting by Carlinpoint Ltd. (T.U.)
44 Earlham Street, London WC2
Artwork by IRAT Services Ltd., 44 Earlham Street, London WC2

Printed by Interdruck Leipzig

A second revised edition of

FIFTY FIGHTING YEARS

By A. Lerumo
(Michael Harmel)

is now available. The book deals with the history of the South African Communist Party from 1921 to 1971. It is divided into the following chapters:

1. Conquest and Dispossession (S.A. before 1870).

2. Liberation and Labour Movements (1870-1921).

3. The Turn to the Masses (1921-1930)

4. From 'Fusion' to Fascism (1920-1950).

5. Apartheid and Resistance (1950-1970).

The book also contains 12 appendices of documents issued by the Communist Party, photographs of Communist Party leaders, maps and reproductions of leaflets and newspapers published by the Party during this historic period.

Price £3 or $6 (U.S.)

Obtainable from Inkululeko Publications,
39 Goodge Street, London W1.